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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 87

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Over 900 undergo mass testing

Mass testing for COVID-19 is in full swing at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. KRIZEL TUAZON

AT A GLANCE

As of 2pm, May 3, 2020**

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	146	2	148
Recovered	131	0	131
Active	10	2	12
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	14	0	14
Recovered	12	0	12
Active	0	0	0
Deaths	2	0	2
Tested	599	349	948

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*

**The CNMI has gone 14 days with no new COVID-19 case. Guam goes one day with no new reported COVID-19 case.

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As of last Saturday, May 2, a total of 948 persons have been tested through the community-based testing at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, according to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. website. There have been no reports yet of anybody testing positive at the mass testing site.

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20-plus in quarantine at PIC. PAGE 3

New curfew: 10pm to 5am

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Curfew hours are now from 10pm to 5am.

The new hours come soon after the number of positive COVID-19 cases in the CNMI has gone to zero and mass testing started last week at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

The original curfew was from 7pm to 6am, for a total of 11 hours; the new curfew is just seven hours, and is touted by the Torres administration as a result of the "demonstrated success of the community in strictly following the set curfew and social distancing directives."

People will now be able to exercise in cooler temperatures and expand the hours for fishing.

"These activities, and other similar activities, are critical to maintaining our community's physical and mental wellbeing as long as social distancing requirements are met," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in a new directive

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IPI furloughs over 500 employees

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As of last Tuesday, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has already furloughed 575 employees, including foreign workers, due to COVID-19 impact, according to IPI Human Resources director Redie Dela Cruz.

At the Commonwealth Casino Commission's regular monthly meeting via video conference last Thursday, Dela Cruz said the closure of the casino prompted them to furlough a large number of their staff on the casino side.

In documents filed before the district court Thursday, IPI legal counsel Michael Dotts separately disclosed

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AP: Most states fall short of coronavirus testing thresholds

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY, MATTHEW PERRONE, JASON DEAREN and NICKY FORSTER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA (AP) — As more states begin to relax their coronavirus lockdowns, most are falling short of the minimum levels of testing suggested by the federal government and recommended by a variety of public health researchers, an Associated Press analysis has found.

Three months into an unprecedented public health emergency, the White House has largely resisted calls for a coordinated plan to con-

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Payless SuperFresh introduces Saipan's first online grocery store, which goes online today.

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D'Elegance Café in Garapan has not shut down and continues to operate daily.

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More than a dozen states let restaurants, stores or other businesses reopen Friday.

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**The CNMI has gone 16 days with no new COVID-19 case. Guam has two new cases.

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Online grocery shopping comes to NMI with Payless SuperFresh

Payless SuperFresh introduces Saipan's first online grocery store—www.paylesssuperfresh.com. Customers are now able to shop for groceries online at their convenience from anywhere.

"We are constantly looking for new and better ways to support our customers, making our products available for direct orders made sense and the online store had been in the development phase well before the COVID crisis," said Morgan Carrico, general manager of Payless SuperFresh. "In light of the pandemic, we accelerated our plans for the website and are hopeful that this platform will make life a little easier for some of our customers, especially those most at-risk."

While the inventory is limited, the online store offers staple grocery items, including canned goods, rice, iced tea, soda, milk and dairy products, fresh bread from Great Harvest, chips, cereal, bathroom tissue and more!

The site is user-friendly, enabling customers to navigate easily, browse through the online store, click on items and quantity, add to cart and check out. A Payless SuperFresh customer service associate will then finalize transaction and payment details via telephone. Designated parking stalls are available for curbside pick-up and limited (next day) delivery options are also available.

The Payless SuperFresh and Truckload Store in Susupe. KRIZEL TUAZON

"Our top priority has always been to meet the ever-changing needs and demands of our customers," said Carrico. "We also want to let our customers know that only a limited inventory is available online during this introductory phase, but we do plan to increase product options in the future and expand our services to meet these needs."

Visitors to the site will be able to view current in-store promotions and Triple J's Customers First Rewards Program points will be applied for any online purchases made by existing members of the program.

About store

Triple J Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store opened its doors in November 2019 at the Townhouse Center in Chalan Kanoa, offering customers a wider variety of the freshest produce on island, a first-of-its-kind Butcher Shop featuring Certified Angus Beef and a dedicated dairy and deli selection. The Truckload Store provides the best prices on electronics and household goods. Store operation hours are 7am to 6pm daily.

» Triple J Payless SuperFresh launches online store

About Triple J

Triple J Enterprises Inc. has served the island communities for over three decades. The Triple J group of companies has several major operations, which include the Triple J Auto Group, representing Ford, Lincoln, Mazda, Honda, Acura, Kia, and a used car dealership on the island of Guam; Triple J Motors representing Mazda, Mitsubishi, and Hyundai on the island of Saipan; Triple J Commercial Tire, which services passenger cars, light trucks, and a full range of commercial vehicles and equipment on the island of Guam; Triple J Rentals, the licensee for Hertz Rent-A-Car in Guam, Saipan, and Palau; Triple J 24-Hour Mini Mart in Mobil in Upper Tumon; Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods, the distributor of high-quality food items including Certified Angus Beef, Hawaii Water, and Tyson food products in Guam, Saipan, and Marshall Islands; and the Triple J Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store on Saipan. The Triple J Restaurant Group owns and operates Outback Steakhouse, Red Lobster in Guam; and Tony Roma's, Capricciosa, Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., Great Harvest Bread Co., and the Surf Club Saipan Restaurant on the island of Saipan. Triple J Real Estate Division, a real estate brokerage and consulting firm, manages Triple J Enterprises' own holdings inclusive of Sandy Beach Homes, Saipan Comfort Homes, and Ocean Ridge Homes on Saipan. Triple J Enterprises also owns and operates the Surfrider Resort Hotel on Saipan. ***(PR)***

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LOCAL
DEQ director Masga is CUC's new manager for oil

20-plus in quarantine at PIC

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With United Airlines resuming its Guam-Saipan flights last May 2, that also means the resumption of the mandatory quarantine of arriving passengers at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio.

Some 20-plus passengers aboard the Guam to Saipan flight were escorted by the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority to PIC, the designated quarantine site, last Saturday.

Esther Muña, chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., confirmed that a total of 27 passengers were brought to PIC. These passengers will undergo the mandatory 14-day quarantine that was authorized by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres last March 23 to help prevent the spread of coronavirus in the CNMI. There was no further information if the 27 passengers were returning residents or tourists.

To date, there have been 264 persons who have been released from quarantine at either PIC or the other designated site, Kanoa Resort.

More medical supplies

Gerald Deleon Guerrero, special assistant for the Homeland Security and Emergency Management, announced via a livestream video on Facebook over the weekend, that another round of personal protective equipment arrived at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last May 1. The PPEs include N95 masks and gloves for COVID-19 response teams.

"These PPEs will go a long way for our doctors and first responders," said Deleon Guerrero.

In the face of the global shortage in PPEs, Deleon Guerrero gave credit to Torres, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force for acting fast with ordering all the PPEs and other equipment that will help doctors, nurses, and first responders prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the CNMI.

COVID-19 in Guam

The Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 169 individuals for COVID-19 on May 2. Two tested positive and 167 tested negative.

According to the Joint Information Center in Guam, the results include samples from clinics, hospitals, the quarantine facility, and samples from the COVID-19 expanded testing at the Agat Senior Center and the Hemlani Apartments in Harmon.

DPHSS has targeted areas where infection may occur due to lack of access to health care, and densely populated apartment complexes.

The DPHSS overall count also includes probable cases of COVID-19 and confirmed positive cases tested by the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego, California, U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, Guam Memorial Hospital Authority, Guam Regional Medical City, Guam National Guard, and Diagnostic Laboratory Services.

To date, Guam has a total of 148 confirmed positive cases, with five deaths and 131 recoveries.

Rotary hands out relief goods in drive-thru

The Rotary Club of Saipan held a relief goods distribution using a drive-thru system last Friday at the San Jose pavilion that benefited about 200 individuals who lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rotary Club of Saipan members hand out relief goods using a drive-thru system last Friday at the San Jose pavilion.
KRIZEL TUAZON

According to club vice president Sean Fricke, each beneficiary got a 5-lb bag of rice, noodles, chips, propane gas, and a hat.

He said they had a predrawn list of beneficiaries after reaching out to several individuals, mostly foreign workers who've lost their jobs or do not have a source of income during this time.

Rotary president Maria Ayuyu said the club members also chipped in. "We also put up our Rotary fund to make this kind gesture happen," she said. "The community has given us support with our Rotary Club events in the past like the McFun Run, and this is our way of giving back to the community as a club."

She also urged the community to continue to be safe, maintain social distancing, and to wear masks.

One of those who received the relief goods said, "I would like to say a big thank you to the Rotary Club. It is a blessing."

Another said, "I did not expect to receive any relief goods, but I am glad I did. This could at least get us through day by day. Let us continue to support one another during these hardest times." ***(Chevy Alipio)***

PSS, Ada want budget law declared unconstitutional

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System and its chief officer, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, want the Superior Court to declare the budget law for this fiscal year unconstitutional.

Mocanu

In a motion for summary judgment last Wednesday, PSS and Ada, through counsel Tiberius D. Mocanu, argue that the earmarks set in Public Law 21-08, which establishes the Commonwealth government budget for fiscal year 2020 and appropriated $37,718,904 to PSS, which is approximately 16% of the budget, are unconstitutional and unenforceable. In particular, they argue that provisions of the law and its amendments that purport to convert general revenue into special revenue do not meet the nexus test.

PSS and Ada said the earmarks do not possess a relationship between the source and purpose of the revenue they distribute, much less a reasonable one.

Consequently, they said, P.L. 21-08's calculation of PSS' budget does not include general revenue to which it is constitutionally entitled under the NMI Constitution.

Mocanu said the CNMI Supreme Court in its decision in the certified question petition from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and MaryLou S. Ada, rendered the formula used by P.L. 21-08 to calculate PSS' share of general revenue unconstitutional.

"It also rendered all subsequent budget modifications and proportional cuts that relied on the original P.L. 21-08 formula unconstitutional as well," Mocanu said.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho set a status conference in the case for June 23, 2020 at 2:30pm. Camacho said there is no temporary restraining order/injunction granted at this time.

Ada and PSS are suing Torres and Finance Secretary David Atalig for violation of the NMI Constitution "because he is carrying out payments and collections under P.L. 21-08." Atalig is allegedly in violation of the NMI Constitution because every allotment and disbursement made pursuant to P.L. 21-08 is unconstitutional.

PSS and Ada asked the court to declare P.L. 21-08 as modified by Torres to be unconstitutional.

In their answer to the lawsuit, Torres and Atalig, through the Office of the Attorney General, said the governor's actions are licensed by the state of emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-04, pursuant to the CNMI Constitution, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Act, and the CNMI Emergency Health Powers Act of 2003.

The OAG asserted, among other things, that the budgetary changes ordered by Torres are required by the statute and that plaintiffs' request would require the governor to violate the law and is thus illegal.

In PSS and Ada's motion for summary judgment, Mocanu said the Supreme Court in their opinion in the Torres's and Ada's certified question—or Torres opinion—was cognizant of its decision's impact and stated that it will have "significant consequences for the Commonwealth's fiscal affairs."

Paradoxically, Mocanu said, Torres and Atalig acknowledge that the Torres opinion changed the law but inexplicably maintain a position that the status quo is legal. The lawyer said Torres and Atalig not only maintain their position that the status quo is legal for this fiscal year but for next year's budget as well.

See PSS on Next Page

Shirly-Ann Weilbacher
P.O. Box 8249
(670) 256-7783

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE GUARDIANSHIP OF MANUEL SANNA W. NORITA An Incompetent By Shirly-Ann Fritz Weilbacher Petitioner	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 20-0126 NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardianship for the above-named by Shirly-Ann Weilbacher, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court and is open for review at the office of the Clerk of the said Court in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at the CNMI Judiciary, before Teresa Kim-Tenorio on the 18th day of May, 2020 at 9:00 A.M. in Courtroom Supreme Court or as soon as thereafter.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
By: /s/
Deputy Clerk of Court

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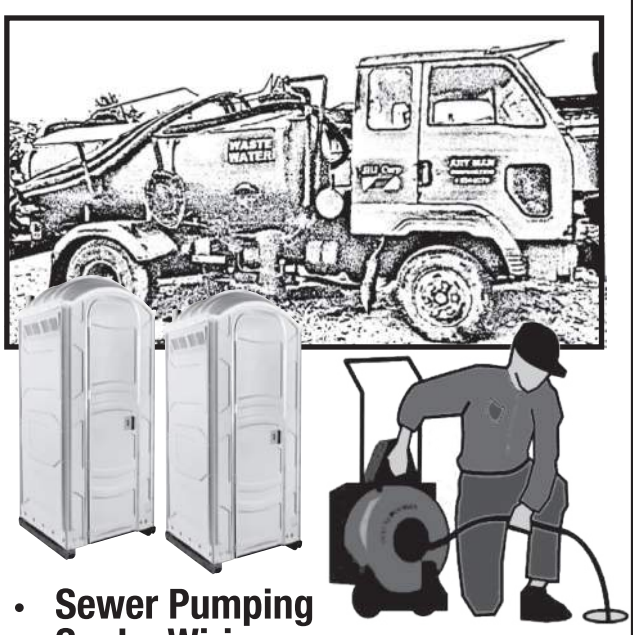

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GES as collateral for PSS MPLT loan?

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Discussion has risen about putting up the Garapan Elementary School as collateral so that the Public School System could borrow $15 million from the Marianas Public Land Trust but all Board of Education members later thumbed down the idea.

BOE members were informed in an emergency meeting last Saturday that taking out a loan with MPLT in order to pay teachers and staff their three missed payrolls, vendors, and summer pay might require PSS to put up the school property as collateral.

According to PSS legal counsel Tiberius Mocanu, it was not officially stated as one of the requirements but it is a possibility, considering that PSS is looking into borrowing $15 million instead of the initial $5 million that was discussed in the last board meeting.

"The real property being put up as collateral, we haven't heard that from any lender or being a requirement of any loan, but it was floated as something MPLT might require if we decide to pursue an MPLT loan and those are the best terms. If it's not necessary, then it won't happen, but if it's a deal breaker for the Board of Education, then I could certainly exclude it," he said.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada said that PSS only wanted to borrow $5 million initially but, after a discussion last Friday with House Speaker Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan) and other members of the Legislature, it was brought to the table that borrowing up to $15 million for PSS would provide them a safety net in case of emergency.

"Their rationale is to give us more than what we need, so that in the future, we don't have to go back and look for more funding in an event that we need more. That gives us the flexibility to use the funds whenever we need it in an emergency situation," he said.

However, all five board members disagreed with borrowing up to $15 million, solely because putting up Garapan Elementary School up for collateral would be "mortgaging PSS' future."

I really do not want Garapan [Elementary School] to be put on the chopping block or held as collateral. We're mortgaging our future," said BOE board member Marylou Ada.

BOE chair Janice Tenorio echoes Ada, stating that the reason behind the loan was a quick fix to pay employees so $15 million is not necessary since PSS is expected to receive over $12 million from the CARES Act.

"The loan is to really get a quick fix and pay our employees. If we can reduce it back to $5 million as the original and not have all these collateral or liability with the $15 million credit, then let's go back down to $5 million. Just to get over the hoop of getting teachers and staff paid and get some of the vendors paid," she said.

BOE vice chair Herman Atalig, and members Andrew Orsini, and Phillip Mendiola-Long agreed, stating that $15 million is too much and would put PSS in more debt when the goal is to get out of debt.

All board members agreed to remove Garapan Elementary School from the board resolution as collateral and to put up any federal funding they are expected to receive, like the CARES Act, as collateral instead, as well as PSS' fiscal year 2020 budget.

MEMORIAL SERVICE
Some of the children, family members, and friends carry the coffin of *Marianas Variety* founding publisher Abed E. Younis into the hearse outside the Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, where memorial services were held Saturday morning. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres presented a plaque to the family to acknowledge the work and contributions Younis made to the Commonwealth and the development of local and regional media. Younis passed away from natural causes last April 18 at his home in Dandan. He was 83. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

AP

From Page 1

duct the millions of tests experts say are needed to contain the virus. What federal officials outlined recently isn't even an official benchmark, and AP's analysis found that a majority of states are not yet meeting it.

With no specific guidelines, states are left to figure out what a successful testing program should be while they simultaneously try to reopen their shattered economies. If states don't have robust testing, public health experts say they will be unable to detect outbreaks quickly enough to contain them, which could lead to more shutdowns.

"It's dangerous and irresponsible," said Lawrence Gostin, a public health specialist at Georgetown University.

In many states, testing has been limited to hospitalized patients, high-risk individuals and front-line workers. But most public health experts agree that containing the virus will require a massive expansion of testing that eventually includes millions of patients without symptoms, which is not happening now.

A testing blueprint released Monday by the Trump administration lacked any metrics state officials could use to make informed decisions. Instead, the document made clear that states are responsible for testing, saying the federal government is the "supplier of last resort."

OVER

From Page 1

The CHCC website states that 838 people have tested negative for COVID-19 at the mass testing site. No further information was provided for the 110 remaining people who also got tested at the Saipan airport but, according to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña, should any positive results pop up, it will be announced to the public at once.

The community-based testing started last April 28.

To date, the CNMI has had 14 confirmed coronavirus cases, with 12 recoveries and two deaths.

KCHC opens clinic on Tinian

The Kagman Community Health Center and its board of directors has announced the opening of the Tinian Isla Community Health clinic in San Jose, Tinian.

According to the a KCHC statement in a Facebook post, TICH will serve as a primary care practice that will provide comprehensive health care services. Additionally, it will offer patients "high quality, personalized health care appropriate for the patient's medical history, their family and all the factors that have an impact on their health."

The clinic also offers a sliding fee scale that is based on income and family size for those who are without insurance or under-insured.

According to KCHC, TICH is a federally qualified health center, meaning that it is community-driven, non-profit clinic located in a medically underserved area. A community health center's mission is to provide affordable, comprehensive primary care to all, regardless of income level or insurance status.

It was learned that a former KCHC clinical staff, Arley Long, will be the primary provider at TICH.

"I am very excited to announce Ms. Long's appointment to the Tinian Community Health Center," said KCHC CEO Vince Castro. "She has been providing services at the Kagman location for over a year [and] these services will now be available to all residents on Tinian."

Castro stated that Long provides "top-notch clinical education and knowledge with a strong passion for providing community-based care. We are pleased that she will now serve her own community of Tinian."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, services will be offered mostly through telemedicine, which is medical visits through a computer with a working webcam, or video and phone calls.

Providers at KCHC are still available to seeing patients via telemedicine.

For more information about the Tinian Health Center or to schedule an appointment, contact: 433-4750.

CURFEW

From Page 1

Under the new curfew, no one should loiter, or be in, on, or about any public streets, highways, roads, alleys, parks, public buildings, places of amusement and entertainment, or vacant lots and places in the CNMI between 10pm and 5am. This applies to both adults and minors, and violators will be subject to penalties.

First-time violators will be fined $200; second-time offense violators will be fined $500; third-time or more offense violators will be fined $750 and/or the impound of his/her vehicle by the Department of Public Safety. Passengers in a vehicle found driving on a public road outside curfew hours will each be fined up to $300.

According to the COVID-19 Task Force, through Special Assistant for Homeland Security & Emergency Management Gerald J. Deleon Guerrero and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña, the amendment does not mean that there is no longer a threat to the CNMI community.

"In the absence of treatments and vaccines proven to be safe and effective, please continue to turn to social distancing to avoid a spike in serious illnesses and deaths that could overwhelm our healthcare system," the new directive states.

CHCC will also continue to investigate all COVID-19 suspects and cases, as well as identify contacts to ensure that transmission of the virus on the island is contained, by expanding contact tracing to all communities.

The original curfew, where all residents must be home by 7pm, was placed by the governor in the CNMI last March 30, following the death of a then-suspected, but later confirmed COVID-19 patient on the island.

IPI

From Page 1

that IPI has furloughed about 585 employees in all due to COVID-19.

When asked about the discrepancy of the numbers of those furloughed, IPI senior vice president of public affairs Tao Xing said yesterday that this is so because it varies daily.

"If there is work, we pull people off furlough," Xing said.

Dela Cruz said the casino has limited operation so they just keep employees to secure the facility and that those furloughed are considered non-essential employees.

As of last Thursday and not including H-2B workers, 42% of IPI's employees are non-U.S. citizens and 58% are U.S. citizens, she said. Including H-2B workers, 62% are non-U.S. citizens and 38% are U.S. citizens, she added.

Also, as of last Thursday and not including H-2B workers, IPI has 701 employees, and with H-2B, 1,062, she said.

Dela Cruz said all recruitment efforts have been suspended due to COVID-19. That also means that they are not able to bring in skilled workers from outside the CNMI.

Dela Cruz said those furloughed have been informed that the furlough has been extended from May 10 to June 12.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

PSS

From Page 3

He noted that in the governor's budget proposal fiscal year 2021, Torres keeps all the earmarks included P.L. 21-08 and continues to exclude them from the calculation of PSS's budget.

"There is a lot of rhetoric surrounding whether PSS should be given more funding, especially against the backdrop of furloughed government workers, a devastated economy, and a global pandemic that threatens our only industry and source of income," Mocanu said.

However, the lawyer said, the Torres opinion stated, until such time as the people of the CNMI change the law, the high court justices are "left to interpret the law in accordance with the text of the NMI Constitution and the drafters' intent."

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Mocanu pointed out that in Torres' open letter to government retirees, surviving spouses and beneficiaries, the governor "clearly admits" that PSS is owed additional funding.

GES as collateral for PSS MPLT loan?

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Discussion has risen about putting up the Garapan Elementary School as collateral so that the Public School System could borrow $15 million from the Marianas Public Land Trust but all Board of Education members later thumbed down the idea.

BOE members were informed in an emergency meeting last Saturday that taking out a loan with MPLT in order to pay teachers and staff their three missed payrolls, vendors, and summer pay might require PSS to put up the school property as collateral.

According to PSS legal counsel Tiberius Mocanu, it was not officially stated as one of the requirements but it is a possibility, considering that PSS is looking into borrowing $15 million instead of the initial $5 million that was discussed in the last board meeting.

"The real property being put up as collateral, we haven't heard that from any lender or being a requirement of any loan, but it was floated as something MPLT might require if we decide to pursue an MPLT loan and those are the best terms. If it's not necessary, then it won't happen, but if it's a deal breaker for the Board of Education, then I could certainly exclude it," he said.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada said that PSS only wanted to borrow $5 million initially but, after a discussion last Friday with House Speaker Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan) and other members of the Legislature, it was brought to the table that borrowing up to $15 million for PSS would provide them a safety net in case of emergency.

"Their rationale is to give us more than what we need, so that in the future, we don't have to go back and look for more funding in an event that we need more. That gives us the flexibility to use the funds whenever we need it in an emergency situation," he said.

However, all five board members disagreed with borrowing up to $15 million, solely because putting up Garapan Elementary School up for collateral would be "mortgaging PSS' future."

I really do not want Garapan [Elementary School] to be put on the chopping block or held as collateral. We're mortgaging our future," said BOE board member Marylou Ada.

BOE chair Janice Tenorio echoes Ada, stating that the reason behind the loan was a quick fix to pay employees so $15 million is not necessary since PSS is expected to receive over $12 million from the CARES Act.

"The loan is to really get a quick fix and pay our employees. If we can reduce it back to $5 million as the original and not have all these collateral or liability with the $15 million credit, then let's go back down to $5 million. Just to get over the hoop of getting teachers and staff paid and get some of the vendors paid," she said.

BOE vice chair Herman Atalig, and members Andrew Orsini, and Phillip Mendiola-Long agreed, stating that $15 million is too much and would put PSS in more debt when the goal is to get out of debt.

All board members agreed to remove Garapan Elementary School from the board resolution as collateral and to put up any federal funding they are expected to receive, like the CARES Act, as collateral instead, as well as PSS' fiscal year 2020 budget.

AP

From Page 1

duct the millions of tests experts say are needed to contain the virus. What federal officials outlined recently isn't even an official benchmark, and AP's analysis found that a majority of states are not yet meeting it.

With no specific guidelines, states are left to figure out what a successful testing program should be while they simultaneously try to reopen their shattered economies. If states don't have robust testing, public health experts say they will be unable to detect outbreaks quickly enough to contain them, which could lead to more shutdowns.

"It's dangerous and irresponsible," said Lawrence Gostin, a public health specialist at Georgetown University.

In many states, testing has been limited to hospitalized patients, high-risk individuals and front-line workers. But most public health experts agree that containing the virus will require a massive expansion of testing that eventually includes millions of patients without symptoms, which is not happening now.

A testing blueprint released Monday by the Trump administration lacked any metrics state officials could use to make informed decisions. Instead, the document made clear that states are responsible for testing, saying the federal government is the "supplier of last resort."

OVER

From Page 1

The CHCC website states that 838 people have tested negative for COVID-19 at the mass testing site. No further information was provided for the 110 remaining people who also got tested at the Saipan airport but, according to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña, should any positive results pop up, it will be announced to the public at once.

The community-based testing started last April 28.

To date, the CNMI has had 14 confirmed coronavirus cases, with 12 recoveries and two deaths.

KCHC opens clinic on Tinian

The Kagman Community Health Center and its board of directors has announced the opening of the Tinian Isla Community Health clinic in San Jose, Tinian.

According to the a KCHC statement in a Facebook post, TICH will serve as a primary care practice that will provide comprehensive health care services. Additionally, it will offer patients "high quality, personalized health care appropriate for the patient's medical history, their family and all the factors that have an impact on their health."

The clinic also offers a sliding fee scale that is based on income and family size for those who are without insurance or under-insured.

According to KCHC, TICH is a federally qualified health center, meaning that it is community-driven, non-profit clinic located in a medically underserved area. A community health center's mission is to provide affordable, comprehensive primary care to all, regardless of income level or insurance status.

It was learned that a former KCHC clinical staff, Arley Long, will be the primary provider at TICH.

"I am very excited to announce Ms. Long's appointment to the Tinian Community Health Center," said KCHC CEO Vince Castro. "She has been providing services at the Kagman location for over a year [and] these services will now be available to all residents on Tinian."

Castro stated that Long provides "top-notch clinical education and knowledge with a strong passion for providing community-based care. We are pleased that she will now serve her own community of Tinian."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, services will be offered mostly through telemedicine, which is medical visits through a computer with a working webcam, or video and phone calls.

Providers at KCHC are still available to seeing patients via telemedicine.

For more information about the Tinian Health Center or to schedule an appointment, contact: 433-4750.

CURFEW

From Page 1

Under the new curfew, no one should loiter, or be in, on, or about any public streets, highways, roads, alleys, parks, public buildings, places of amusement and entertainment, or vacant lots and places in the CNMI between 10pm and 5am. This applies to both adults and minors, and violators will be subject to penalties.

First-time violators will be fined $200; second-time offense violators will be fined $500; third-time or more offense violators will be fined $750 and/or the impound of his/her vehicle by the Department of Public Safety. Passengers in a vehicle found driving on a public road outside curfew hours will each be fined up to $300.

According to the COVID-19 Task Force, through Special Assistant for Homeland Security & Emergency Management Gerald J. Deleon Guerrero and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña, the amendment does not mean that there is no longer a threat to the CNMI community.

"In the absence of treatments and vaccines proven to be safe and effective, please continue to turn to social distancing to avoid a spike in serious illnesses and deaths that could overwhelm our healthcare system," the new directive states.

CHCC will also continue to investigate all COVID-19 suspects and cases, as well as identify contacts to ensure that transmission of the virus on the island is contained, by expanding contact tracing to all communities.

The original curfew, where all residents must be home by 7pm, was placed by the governor in the CNMI last March 30, following the death of a then-suspected, but later confirmed COVID-19 patient on the island.

IPI

From Page 1

that IPI has furloughed about 585 employees in all due to COVID-19.

When asked about the discrepancy of the numbers of those furloughed, IPI senior vice president of public affairs Tao Xing said yesterday that this is so because it varies daily.

"If there is work, we pull people off furlough," Xing said.

Dela Cruz said the casino has limited operation so they just keep employees to secure the facility and that those furloughed are considered non-essential employees.

As of last Thursday and not including H-2B workers, 42% of IPI's employees are non-U.S. citizens and 58% are U.S. citizens, she said. Including H-2B workers, 62% are non-U.S. citizens and 38% are U.S. citizens, she added.

Also, as of last Thursday and not including H-2B workers, IPI has 701 employees, and with H-2B, 1,062, she said.

Dela Cruz said all recruitment efforts have been suspended due to COVID-19. That also means that they are not able to bring in skilled workers from outside the CNMI.

Dela Cruz said those furloughed have been informed that the furlough has been extended from May 10 to June 12.

She said they have already issued certification to all IPI employees who need that document when they submit application for unemployment to get federal benefits.

The director said that during their last meeting, the work hours schedule per pay period of non-exempt employees were reduced to 56 hours, then they also reduced the hours of exempt employees to 56 hours as well.

Dela Cruz said 123 employees have been reclassified now as non-exempt employees. "Ninety percent of our population are now non-exempt employees," she added.

As to casino commissioner Joe Reyes' question if IPI foresees more employees being furloughed, Dela Cruz said there is a strong possibility of that happening because the company has not been generating revenue since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

When Reyes asked who is making the decision to furlough anyone, CCC executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero said it is his understanding that there is an ad hoc committee with IPI that is supposed to be making that decision. However, with the absence of a chief executive officer, general counsel, and chief financial officer—who are all part of the ad hoc committee—Deleon Guerrero said this begs the question of who in the ad hoc committee is making the decision to furlough. Dela Cruz said she and senior vice president of public affairs Tao Xing have been appointed to the ad hoc committee.

When asked if CW workers have also been furloughed since they are hired via contract, Dela Cruz said yes and that they're working with their legal department through this process.

Attorneys Kelley Butcher and Michael Dotts are with IPI's legal department. Dotts also participated during Thursday's meeting.

Deleon Guerreo asked if IPI has been making an effort to hire locals for construction considering many U.S. embassies' suspension of H-2B visa interviews. Dela Cruz said all hiring in on freeze.

IPI has been struggling with the deadline to finish the casino-resort project in Garapan as U.S. embassies have suspended all ongoing H-2B visa interviews until further notice due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, according to IPI vice president of construction Eric Poon during the meeting.

PSS

From Page 3

He noted that in the governor's budget proposal fiscal year 2021, Torres keeps all the earmarks included P.L. 21-08 and continues to exclude them from the calculation of PSS's budget.

"There is a lot of rhetoric surrounding whether PSS should be given more funding, especially against the backdrop of furloughed government workers, a devastated economy, and a global pandemic that threatens our only industry and source of income," Mocanu said.

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Mocanu pointed out that in Torres' open letter to government retirees, surviving spouses and beneficiaries, the governor "clearly admits" that PSS is owed additional funding.

Dela Cruz is interim casino commission chairman

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Commissioners of the Commonwealth Casino Commission voted Thursday last week for Ramon M. Dela Cruz of Tinian to serve as an interim chairman effective last Friday.

At a meeting held via videoconference, the commissioners also voted for Diego M. Songao of Rota to serve as interim secretary effective Thursday, and CCC audit manager Charlie O. Atalig as acting executive director effective today, Monday.

» Atalig will serve as CCC acting executive director

This comes as the terms of CCC chair Juan M. Sablan and commissioners Joseph C. Reyes and Alvaro A. Santos, all representing Saipan, expired Thursday. Dela Cruz and Songao have four more years to serve.

CCC executive director Edward C. Deleon Guerrero was nominated by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to serve as CCC commissioner.

Atalig

Torres also nominated former House speaker Rafael S. Demapan and former Zoning board chair Mariano Taitano to serve as members of CCC representing the Third Senatorial District or Saipan.

The Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation will continue the public hearing today, Monday, for the confirmation of Deleon Guerrero, Demapan, and Taitano.

Torres wrote his nomination letters last March 11 to Rep. Paul P. Sablan (R-Saipan), who chairs the SNILD. The appointment requires the advice and consent of the SNILD. If confirmed, Demapan, Taitano, and Deleon Guerrero will serve four-year terms, which will expire in April 2024.

Relief packs distributed to laid off and furloughed CWs

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

To alleviate some of the hardships being experienced by foreign workers who have been laid off or furloughed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a newly-formed group called Friends of the CWs held the first of what is being eyed as a series of relief distributions last May 1, Friday, at the Micro Beach Pavillon in Garapan.

Irene Holl, who initiated the project, said the drive is mainly intended to help displaced CWs—foreign workers with CNMI work visas called CW—who are not eligible to obtain food stamps, which are for U.S. citizens only.

"We are praying for you and please pray for us too, that you can touch lives so people can open their mind and help. We're praying for you. Stay safe. This too shall pass. We will be together in this. We are one in this. Our thoughts and our prayers are always with you," Holl said, as a message to the CWs.

At least 60 households were given relief packs last Friday. CWs who want to avail have to register to be given a scheduled date of distribution, where they would need to present an ID and their CW permits.

"Everybody is affected. Priority-wise, we look at CW-1s who are affected—their company is closed, they have no source of income, [and] they have no access to food stamp. We are trying our best to accommodate all, but we have to prioritize, because others really [have] totally zero [income]," one of the volunteers, Alma Basilgo, said.

The first batch of donations were all from personal donors, except for two companies, Budget Micronesia and Bridge Capital. Volunteers also came to help with repacking and distribution.

"There are two groups, the donors and the volunteers. Many of them [donors] would want to remain anonymous. …Many also came out and openly donated…and we have donations and items that we will distribute next week," Basilgo said.

The second batch of distribution is on Saturday, May 9. Registration for the third batch of distribution is also already filled up.

"If there will be available slots after the screening of the registered CW holders, we will call those who met the qualifications criteria. However, if there will be no more slots available for second and third batches, please wait for the opening of registration for the fourth batch to be posted on the Facebook page, 'Friends of CWs,'" Basilgo added.

At least 60 furloughed or laid off foreign workers are given food packs through a relief project organized by "Friends of CWs" last Friday at the Micro Beach Pavilion in Garapan. The next batch of distribution is on May 9, Saturday.
IVA MAURIN

Keeping sturdy the spirit of 'Marianas Strong'

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT

Last of three part

With the stay-at-home directive due to the COVID-19 pandemic, now is the best time to start your journey to physical wellbeing since you can do it right in the comfort of your own home.

Derek Cutting

Thanks to Latte Built-24 Hour Fitness & Nutrition owner Derek Cutting and one of his instructors, Sami Babauta-Birmingham, they keep the fitness fuel burning and transforming people to take charge of their own health and bodies by offering free fitness classes online.

Cutting became a professional personal trainer 10 years ago in Florida. He then brought his training business to Hawaii in 2013 and finally, moved to Saipan in 2015 and started a boot camp called "Latte Built Fitness & Nutrition."

"…It has been a great way to help hundreds of people every day with their fitness and nutrition goals. …When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out worldwide, we were forced to shut down our physical locations due to the large crowds that our 24-hour gyms naturally generate," he said.

Sami Birmingham is shown doing kettlebell swings as part of her online class called "Toilet paper TABATA." CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"One of our class instructors, Kerri Bauer, began offering her 'Yoga, Pilates, & More' class live on Facebook, as a way to continue to be there for her regular class participants. We, as a team, began discussing ways to expand on this idea and how we can give back to anyone from around the world who may enjoy following along with an online class. From that it evolved into multiple types of classes being taught live online six days a week by four different Latte Built personal trainers," he added.

The community can join the free online classes, which may be accessed through the Latte Built Facebook page. Yoga classes are every Monday from 7:30am to 8:30am; Wednesday is "Quarantine Quickie" from 7:30am to 8am, Thursday is "Yoga Core & More"—all with instructor Kerri Bauer.

"TP-Tabata" is every Tuesday from 7:30am to 8am with instructor Sami Babauta-Birmingham. Thursdays is "EV-FIT HIIT" from 7:30am to 8:30am and at 6:30pm to 7:30pm with instructor Enrico, and "LB HOME BOOTCAMP" is every Saturday from 7:30am to 8:30am and at 6:30pm to 7:30pm with instructor Alberto.

"During this time of quarantine, I know many miss their regular schedule of hitting the gym on a daily basis," Cutting said, hence the migration of their classes online.

"I have always loved to see a client's face when they realize they reach their goals. It is very fulfilling to me to see not only their facial expression, but more so their energy and aura completely change before my eyes and realize I had a part in helping them," he added.

For many, the gym has become a type of church, Cutting said, a way for people to release whatever negative energy they may be experiencing and apply it into something healthy for themselves. "It's rewarding to know our Live Page now has nearly 1,000 members following it and doing the workouts from all over the world and it was only launched one month ago," he added.

Babauta-Birmingham

Sami Babauta-Birmingham got started with Fitness when she was around 17 years old and was one (of two) of the first licensed Zumba fitness instructors on Saipan.

"I taught Zumba Fitness and Spin at Gold's Gym and continued teaching Zumba in Guam during my first year of college. A lot of my classes were free at the University of Guam Field House or in support of a fundraiser," she said. "When I moved to California, I was able to intern as a group instructor assistant in classes like boot camp, circuit training, and boxing. That's when I shifted from teaching Zumba to teaching more circuit training style."

As a health care professional, having learned public health in college, Birmingham-Babauta promotes physical activity as a means to improve overall health—to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases, lower blood pressure, improve heart function, and more.

"Staying active is one of the best things you can do for yourself, and it's completely free at Latte Built online classes every day. …I work with people to encourage making exercise a part of their daily routine and to see it as something as important as eating lunch, taking a shower, or having your morning coffee," she said

"When they move from seeing it as a 'chore' or 'cruel punishment'" designed solely to improve physical appearance to understanding the physiological benefit exercise provides and begin to enjoy their body's ability to be mobile and strong, that brings me the most joy. I think that, during this time, especially the notion of needing a gym disappears and more people are getting comfortable using what's available in their homes and backyards to get the work done. I love seeing more people empowered to take charge of their health at home," she added.

Coast Guard cutter deters illegal fishing in Oceania

HONOLULU—The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Midgett* concluded last Thursday a 37-day patrol to counter illegal fishing and regional security operations in Oceania.

"I'm extremely proud of our crew, overcoming the challenges coronavirus has brought and successfully conducting our first operational patrol," said Capt. Alan McCabe, commanding officer, *Midgett*. "Now more than ever, ensuring our persistent presence in the region is vital to protecting national interests. We are proactively conducting our missions and appreciate the excellent support from within the Service." *Midgett*'s crew protected U.S. fisheries by patrolling the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone surrounding Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, and Palmyra Atoll. This action ensured U.S. presence to assure U.S. sovereignty and resource security in these remote regions.

Midgett also patrolled the high seas and boarded foreign-flagged fishing vessels, enforcing international fisheries regulations under the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission to promote maritime governance. These operations targeted IUU fishing in the highly valued "Tuna Belt" and directly supported the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency Operation 365, committed to consistent regional enforcement presence.

Patrolling over 7,118 square nautical miles (8,191 statute miles), the *Midgett* 's law enforcement team boarded seven commercial foreign-flagged fishing vessels. The boardings verified compliance with WCPFC conservation management measures and specifications for the marking and identification of fishing vessels. They conducted 15 additional sightings and vessel queries. Those reports were provided to the FFA Regional Fisheries Surveillance Center in Honiara, Solomon Islands, demonstrating the Coast Guard's interoperability with its key regional partners. The crew conducted joint operations with crews aboard an HC-130 Hercules long-range surveillance aircraft from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point, who flew several reconnaissance flights to improve maritime domain awareness.

The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Midgett* boards a fishing vessel to conduct a law enforcement boarding to ensure compliance with international fisheries regulations and counter illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing in the Pacific Ocean on April 27, 2020. *Midgett*'s crew protected U.S. fisheries by patrolling the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone surrounding Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, and Palmyra Atoll. This action ensured U.S. presence to assure U.S. sovereignty and resource security in these remote regions.

U.S. COAST GUARD/USCGC MIDGETT

"The presence of a National Security Cutter in this part of the Pacific to enforce Conservation and Management Measures established by the WCPFC and working cooperatively with the FFA represents the U.S. and the Service's commitment to our partnerships in the region," said McCabe. "The prevention of Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated tuna fishing is vital and will have a direct, positive effect on peace, governance, and continued American presence throughout the region."

"The deployment of cutter *Midgett* to Oceania for their first patrol is a signal of our enduring presence in the region and demonstrates the United States' continued commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," said Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, the Coast Guard's Pacific Area commander. "In the face of coercive and antagonistic behavior, we offer transparent engagement and partnership in support of individual sovereignty and the protection of our mutual interests." *Midgett*'s crew of 120 departed their homeport of Honolulu in late March but returned shortly after to address concerns over possible COVID-19 exposure among the crew. One crew member who did not sail with the cutter for other reasons tested positive for the virus on April 1. Although no one else showed COVID-19 symptoms, the command, in concert with military and state health officials, took immediate and decisive action to quarantine and test those at risk of exposure. No one aboard tested positive, and the ill member ashore made a full recovery. *Midgett* resumed the patrol on April. 8.

"Cutter *Midgett*'s successful first patrol countering IUU fishing to promote maritime governance in Oceania is essential to U.S. national security and to supporting Pacific Island Forum countries whose resource security is vital to their own national security," said Rear Adm. Kevin Lunday, commander, Coast Guard 14th District. "*Midgett* also conducted significant training while underway to improve and sustain the crew and cutter's operational and warfighting readiness. The Coast Guard remains *Semper Paratus* ('Always Ready'), despite the challenges of this global pandemic."

The Pacific Islands FFA strengthens national capacity and regional solidarity so its 17 members can manage, control, and develop their tuna fisheries now and in the future. Based in Honiara, the Solomon Islands, FFA's 17 Pacific Island members are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

The WCPFC is an international body made up of 43 nations and international organizations. Members agree to allow the 13-enforcer countries in the pact to board and record any potential violations on their nationally flagged vessels. The findings go to the WCPFC, who notifies the vessel's flag state of the suspected infraction for further investigation. ***(USCG)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

May 4th, 1999

No extra money for PSS

Some 50 public school teachers, staff and parents yesterday stormed the Governor's Office to lobby for additional funding in another bid to prevent the suspension of the kindergarten program and further layoffs in the education sector. Confronted with financial troubles, the Public School System is currently implementing deep cost-cutting steps that include non-renewal of employment contracts of close to 300 non-teaching personnel and elimination of the Headstart program. The governor, however, explained declining revenues are tying his hands to commit extra money for the sector.

SGMA: Taxing CNMI garments will kill local manufacturers

Local garment manufacturers will be forced out of business if US Congress passes a proposed legislation taking away the duty-free privileges granted the Northern Marianas, paving the way for foreign countries to bring more apparel goods into the mainland. This is the contention of the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association in a letter that will be sent to members of the US House of Representatives in efforts to thwart attempts to tax CNMI products entering the American domestic market. The letter also comes on the heels of recent statements made by the American Textile Manufacturers Institute to US lawmakers lashing out at the "Made in the USA" label in finished garments from the islands which they alleged are produced under sweatshop conditions.

May 4th, 2000

Local economy lost $132 million in '99

The Commonwealth economy continues to suffer, with official government statistics indicating a dramatic decline in business activities in the Northern Marianas last year. The slowdown was attributed to the big number of establishments which were forced by economic upheavals to cease operations or continue incurring losses due to the weakening consumer confidence on the island. Business gross revenue in 1999 fell by over $132 million to $2.106 billion from the previous year's $2.238 billion, according to an economic report from the CNMI Department of Commerce.

Seamen sue employer for $-M

A group of Filipino seamen yesterday filed a complaint before the U.S. District Court against their employer, demanding over $6 million in damages representing unpaid wages, penalty charges and other costs. Angyuta Shipping Co. Ltd., which owns and operates the Panamanian-registered M/V *Celeste*, was slapped with the lawsuit after the plaintiffs claimed they have not been paid their wages since June 1999. Nicolas A. Songsong, president of the shipping firm based on Rota, could not be reached for comment on the suit. The telephone numbers listed in the phone book are temporarily out of service. In the complaint filed by their lawyer John M. Chambers, the seamen said they worked as crew members and officers of the vessel under the employment contracts they signed with Angyuta.

May 4, 2005

Ocean university makes 37th voyage to Saipan

The Wakai Nekko No Kai Ocean University made its 37th visit to the islands when it docked at the Port of Saipan yesterday at 7:30am for a two-day visit. This year's visit by the Tokyo-based floating university was made more significant with the participation of two Northern Marianas College students in its voyage from Tokyo to Saipan. At least a hundred students from Northern Marianas College, Saipan Southern High School, Kagman High School, Mt. Carmel School, Grace Christian College and Marianas High School gathered at the port to welcome the students, teachers and the crew of the university aboard the ship, called NCC Fuji Maru.

3 men nabbed in NI for pot, illegal firearm

Federal and CNMI operatives intercepted a fishing vessel in the Northern Islands and arrested three people for alleged illegal possession of a firearm and marijuana. Operatives from the U.S. Coast Guard and the CNMI/Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force swooped down on the Tenshou II fishing vessel while at sea Tuesday morning as it headed from Pagan to Saipan. Department of Public Safety spokesman Eric David said the operatives escorted the fishing vessel to Saipan and arrested three persons, whose identities he did not disclose as of press time. The vessel had 10 occupants, some of whom were in handcuffs, as seen in DPS photos.

Showers return but drought continues across much of Micronesia

A dry trade-wind pattern is expected to continue the next two weeks with only a few showers at times, according to the latest advisory from the National Weather Service in Guam.

The upper-level pattern is starting to become more favorable for shower development but trade-wind disturbances remain weak, said the NWS advisory last Friday.

"Guam will continue to receive more showers than the CNMI. Model guidance is beginning to lift deep convection north of 10N but keep rainfall amount between 1 to 2 inches for Guam the next two weeks or so with lower amounts across the CNMI. It may be a month or so before adequate rainfall returns to Guam and one to two months for Saipan and Tinian," the advisory states.

"The Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone has strengthened and weak disturbances have edged farther north and west recently. These features have provided much-needed showers for most islands south of 8N across all of Micronesia. A favorable upper-level pattern has encouraged showers to develop farther north across Micronesia east of Chuuk. The northward shift in the convergence zone as well as the presence of upper-level divergence are indicators that a wetter pattern is beginning to establish across most islands of Micronesia south of 10N," it added.

Right now, there are no official water conservation measures are in effect for the Mariana Islands. Officials report water levels are still above thresholds for concern.

For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000 or 664-8000. ***(PR)***

Assault coalition fears COVID-19 pandemic may push numbers up

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence migrated one of the activities it had lined up for the commemoration of Sexual Assault Awareness Month last April.

According to Audrey Ada, sexual assault response team manager, their coalition conducted a 30-day Sexual Assault Awareness Month challenge through social media. "The National Sexual Violence Resource Center held a different prompt every day to allow them to share information in terms of resources or positivity throughout social media," she said. "Also they held an annual prayer last weekend at the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa and Grace Christian Church. We were able to reflect briefly on the thought of Sexual Assault Awareness Month."

This comes at a time when the CNMI and the rest of the world are staying home to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus. That situation,— a quasi-lockdown and stay-at-home guidelines—may have likely pushed the rate of child abuse in the CNMI to go up, according to NMCADSV executive director Maisei Tenorio.

"However, we don't have the actual numbers to back it up. But what we do know is that victims are reaching out for help in small numbers due to all of us staying at home," she said.

"Additional stressors due to the pandemic, like the use of alcohol or drugs, may be exacerbating the situation, making things worse for the frequency of violence and severity of abuse or both. [Yet] victims are not reaching out as frequently as they were prior to the pandemic," she said.

Victims may have very limited ways of reaching out for help, "but if our community takes time to check in with people in their life, family, and neighborhood this could be the lifeline that victims need," she added.

Tenorio also stated that it is important that all of us do what we can provide that helping hand or lifeline to victims.

To reach out, you may call the Office of the Attorney General's Victim Witness Advocacy Unit that is open Monday-Thursday from 8am to 12pm and can be reached at 237-7600. You can also visit NMCADSV on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to learn more about domestic violence and sexual assault. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

TTT and SFA boat raffle moved to December

The organizing committees of the Tasi to Table youth fishing club and the Saipan Fishermen's Association would like to inform the public that the raffle slated for July 2020 has been postponed to Dec. 12, 2020. Location and time will be provided at a later time.

Between the organizers and sponsors, it was agreed upon that, with the economic slowdown from COVID-19, it is prudent that the raffle drawing be moved to give better opportunities for the community to avail of these special fishing prizes up for grabs. Sponsors of the specialty prized items—Coral Reef Marine Center Guam, Morning Star Boats, Mercury Marine, Mobil Oil Marianas, Saipan Fishing Tackle & Sporting Goods, Marianas Pacific Distributors Inc. (MarPac), Roil Soil Clothing, IT&E, 4Ever CNMI, Saipan Fishermen's Association, and Tasi to Table—have all agreed to move the raffle date ensuring opportunities for all involved.

Grand prize raffle is a brand new 16-foot Morning Star aluminum hull boat with a 60hp 4-stroke outboard motor that comes with a trailer, bimini top, handheld VHF radio, navigation lights, fuel tank, life jackets and emergency flare set. A complete boat package was originally intended to be offered during the SFA's 36th annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament slated for July 2020.

"Given the nature of what this pandemic is causing, we [SFA] feel it imperative that we consider [moving] our raffle program," said Gene Weaver, SFA president.

The raffle is designed to support the youth in that funds garnered will go toward the mentorship program that the SFA has with Tasi to Table to offer to each of Public School System's high schools.

At $100 for each raffle ticket and with a limited number of tickets printed for this drawing, purchasers have a better chance of winning great prizes that follow the grand prize offered by Coral Reef Marine Center Guam, Morning Star Boats and Mercury Marine outboards.

"We have been given an opportunity to support the CNMI's youth fishing club as well the SFA over the years and because of the situation we are facing with Covid-19, Coral Reef Marine Center Guam has agreed with the organizing committee to move up the raffle date. It would provide a better position for all involved with securing a better outcome for this type of fundraising activity that benefits the youth fishing club with Tasi to Table," said Tim Perez, Coral Reef Marine Center Guam.

Cecilio Raiukuilipy, chairman of the Tasi to Table youth fishing club, said, "We want to ensure that we make the most of this opportunity. The raffle is intended to support the fishing clubs and therefore a decision amongst members of TTT that we will move the date. Our youth fishing clubs…deserve the best opportunities we can provide… TTT will continue to push opportunities for our youth."

With added time for the raffle drawing, additional sponsors for the raffle now include other businesses offering packages that will be drawn as well. At $100 for each ticket, a total value of prizes being offered in December is estimated at $30,000 in value.

"For those that have already purchased tickets, we thank you in advance and ask for your understanding in the postponement," added Weaver.

For raffle ticket purchase, contact TTT members at 789-2539, 788-8057, 483-4363, 789-6363 or members of the SFA to get your tickets. Limited tickets are available for purchase. ***(PR)***

Water service interruptions for Isley tank service areas

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there is a water service interruption causing low pressure to no water for customers in the following Isley tank service areas: As Perdido, As Gonno, Koblerville, San Antonio, Afetnas, Chalan Piao, Chalan Kanoa, Susupe, San Jose and Oleai, due to low tank level at the Isley tanks near the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

The purpose of the water interruption is due to a pump and motor failure at the Maui shaft 1 well that was identified Friday morning by CUC water operators. The pump and motor in the Maui 1 shaft is located 110 feet below the surface, which requires the use of a crane to transport the replacement materials to the bottom of the shaft. The replacement of the pump and motor is anticipated to be completed today, May 4, 2020. Customers in the affected areas will receive improved water pressure after the tank level increases and the distribution system's pressure stabilizes.

CUC urges customers in these areas to continue to practice water conservation during the dry season and to contact the CUC Customer Call Center to report leaks for repairs. For further details on water conservation, refer to CUC's Drought Advisory on CUC's Facebook page. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Teachers at the Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Middle School extend a happy Teacher Appreciation Week to all teachers in the CNMI, as the nation marks Teacher Appreciation Week on May 4-8, 2020. The U.S. Congress declared National Teacher Day on March 7, 1980. Five years later, the National PTA established Teacher Appreciation Week during the first full week of May. Since then, families around the nation and the CNMI have been showing their appreciation to teachers. This year, the Public School System has plans throughout the week and invite students and families to show their love and appreciation.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Food stamp assistance: Congress must look to increase funding level

Lawmakers have spent the past several weeks approving legislation to make billions of dollars in financial relief available to businesses and the estimated 30 million people now unemployed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One segment of the population that has been overlooked in the funding bills is one that also needs assistance—those who rely on food stamps. Congress must address the need for increased funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in the next financial aid package.

Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa., and U.S. Rep. Mike Doyle, D-Forest Hills, are pressing for an expansion of food stamp benefits as well as an investment in a program that would allow recipients to use their electronic benefit card for online ordering and payment. At present, SNAP recipients cannot place orders online and must do their food shopping in person.

Mr. Casey is seeking a 15% increase in SNAP benefits, which are currently capped for Pennsylvania residents at $646 a month for a four-person household. The state Department of Human Services had sought permission from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which manages SNAP, to issue additional benefits but was denied.

Even with a 15% increase, a family of four would receive less than $100 a month in additional funding, but it could mean a world of difference for those who rely on the assistance.

Unemployment claims in Pennsylvania have skyrocketed to more than 1.6 million in the past month, putting a severe strain on local food banks that are trying desperately to keep up with the demand for food. That has also impacted the more than 720,000 state households that are receiving the maximum food stamp allowance and may not be getting the same level of assistance from food banks because of the increased demand.

SNAP recipients in the state include 688,000 people with disabilities and another 184,000 elderly. Many of those residents will not qualify for the increased unemployment benefits approved by Congress and will rely solely on SNAP benefits to feed themselves and their families.

"We must provide more food assistance as more families struggle financially and our food banks strain to help," Mr. Doyle wrote on Twitter.

Congressional leaders continue to roll out assistance programs to provide stopgap funding while the nation's economy begins measured attempts at reopening. Those who rely on food stamps for survival must be included in the next funding proposals.

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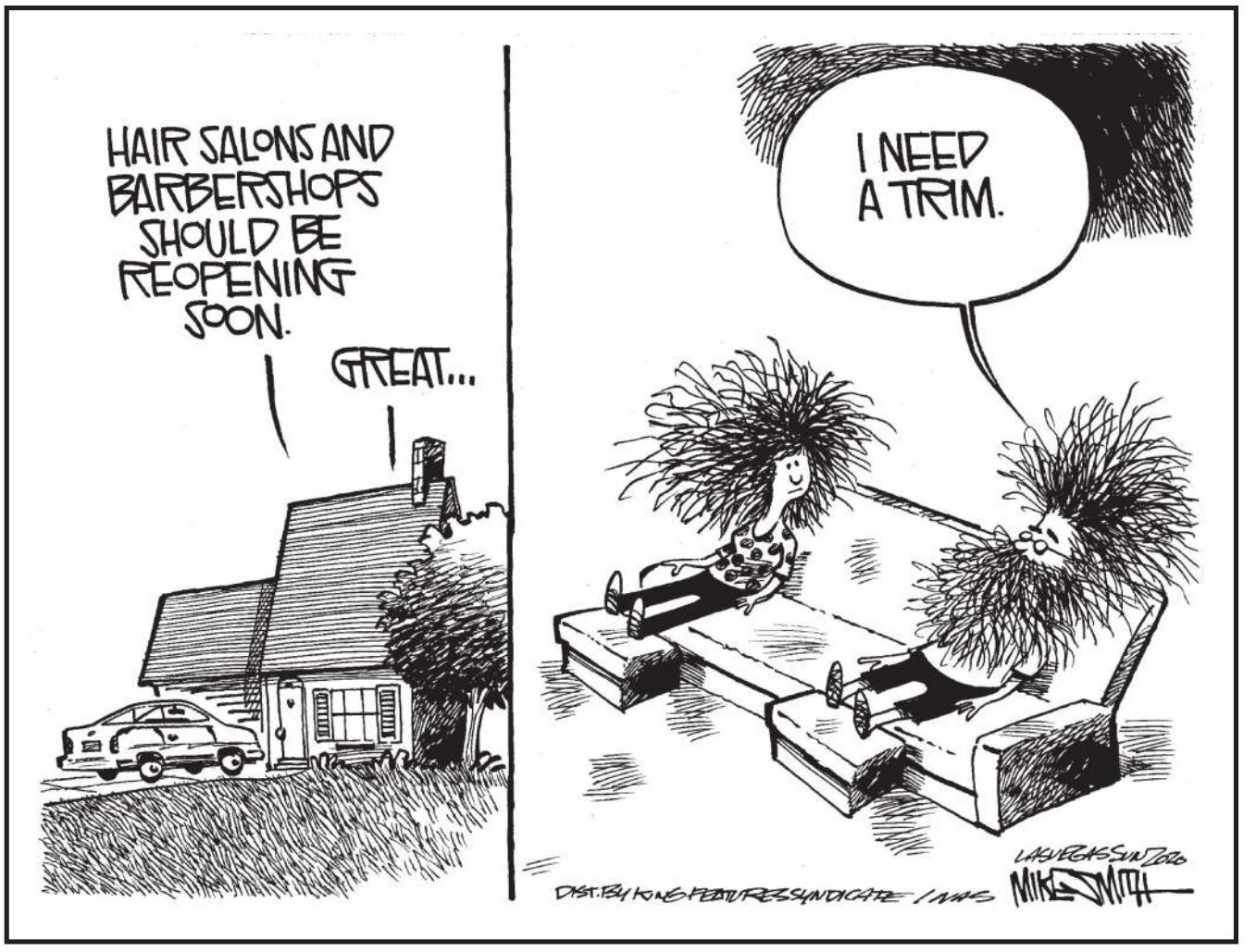
HAIR SALONS AND BARBERSHOPS SHOULD BE REOPENING SOON.
GREAT...
I NEED A TRIM.
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE
LAS VEGAS SUN 2020
MIKE SMITH

Millions of small businesses are about to collapse. We can't afford the mistakes we made in 2008

By ROGER LOWENSTEIN
Los Angeles Times

Roger Lowenstein is the author, most recently, of America's Bank: The Epic Struggle to Create the Federal Reserve.

The last time America suffered an economic meltdown, in 2008, we came out of it poorly.

Yes, the economy and the stock market recovered. So did the banks, with a big assist from Uncle Sam. But millions of homeowners were left with mortgage debts that squeezed their disposable incomes to the vanishing point.

The unshared recovery proved a downer in two ways. First, the recovery was unusually sluggish. Second, it gave rise to simmering class resentments. Arguably, it led to the election of Donald Trump.

How can we avoid a similar shock this time?

Every depression is distinct, but I'd argue that the victims of the COVID-19 depression—this year's version of households drowning in mortgage debt—are America's small businesses. This time, the economist Ken Rogoff says, "the small businesses are getting slaughtered."

A decade ago, the subprime crisis blew up the entire economy. This time, the shock to small business has led to a vicious multiplier effect: Those shuttered hair salons aren't ordering supplies or investing in new hair dryers.

The federal government recently enacted a small-business rescue package in the CARES Act. But it's already exhausted and beset with bureaucratic problems. Relatively few mom-and-pop businesses got loans. By contrast, the Federal Reserve's emergency measures such as buying debt have immediately propped up large corporations. Government aid aside, larger firms are naturally better suited to weathering the storm. Larger companies can tap capital markets, which are used to translating future prospects into current dollars. Even if McDonald's isn't selling as many hamburgers today as it did before, investors know that eventually its business will recover.

Small businesses, however, are on their own. The corner pizzeria cannot borrow against the future, because by the time the recovery arrives it may not exist.

There are some 30 million such businesses in the U.S. (41,000 do sell pizza). Most are tiny, but cumulatively they employ 60 million people.

Since these firms account for 44% of the gross domestic product, to lose even a sizable fraction would be an economic catastrophe. Millions of employees would lose their jobs. Thousands of ideas would go up in smoke. Small business is the laboratory for big ideas.

The cultural fallout would be just as serious. If every coffee shop were rebranded a Starbucks, the caffeine would still be there, but it wouldn't taste or feel the same.

Reports from the tapestry of small business around the country—a grocer in New Orleans, newspapers from Oregon to West Virginia, an art gallery in my home city of Boston—suggest that small businesses everywhere are fighting for their lives. In Camden, Maine, the lone bookstore shut its doors for good.

Each of these businesses represents the savings, the sweat and the dreams of an entrepreneur or family. On average, their proprietors earn only about $50,000 a year. But they symbolize something larger—call it the dream of plausible opportunity.

Part of that dream got destroyed or badly damaged in the mortgage crisis. But we don't have to repeat the mistakes of 2008.

As part of the $2.2-trillion CARES legislation, Congress authorized $349 billion in federally guaranteed loans for firms with fewer than 500 employees. Importantly, firms that retain their pre-crisis payroll for workers will have these loans forgiven.

This is a big improvement from 2008, when neither regulators nor Congress was willing to endorse a full-scale bailout for mortgage owners. The fear then was that undeserving homeowners would benefit. And it was true: If you want to help a lot of people in a hurry, fraud and waste will be a cost of doing business.

The same tradeoff is true today. The good news is that Congress, recognizing the scale of this crisis, was willing to allocate much more money so that small-business borrowers would emerge from the crisis with healthy balance sheets.

But in its eagerness to build in safeguards, it wrapped the program in red tape. Businesses had to apply for the loans through banks. The banks have been uncertain about the criteria to qualify for the federal guarantee, which has gummed the works.

Law firms, accountants and tech companies figured out the

See MILLIONS on Next Page

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Immigrants are playing a vital role in COVID-19 response and recovery

By TIM BREENE
The Baltimore Sun

Tim Breene (TBreene@wr.org) is CEO of World Relief.

President Donald Trump issued an executive order last week temporarily halting immigration to the U.S. Not only does this keep families apart during an already psychologically trying time, but it puts a stigma on America's immigrant community, many of whom are putting their lives at risk as health care and other front-line workers.

As CEO of Baltimore-based World Relief, which has welcomed immigrants and refugees to the United States for over 40 years, I have seen firsthand how people come to this country not just eager to transform their own lives but eager to transform their new communities, to give, not to take. This is one of the reasons why World Relief—along with dozens of prominent faith, business, civic and immigration organizations—is participating as a founding member in the #AllofUS campaign to celebrate how immigrants and citizens are standing shoulder to shoulder in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

Born a British citizen and raised in Northern Ireland, I'm an immigrant myself. I worry that this ban on immigrants will create an "us versus them" mentality among Americans in a time when we should all be joining together, regardless of our birth places. It also stokes fear that immigrants are, according to the executive order, creating an "excess labor supply" and "at a time when we need to prioritize Americans."

The reality is that immigrants are playing a critical role in front-line efforts during this crisis, and all of our contributions to the economy and society are indispensable. Last year, Harvard Medical School found that immigrants make up 1 in 4 health care workers in the U.S. And a 2019 Health Affairs report found that care for America's elderly and disabled people disproportionately relies on immigrant labor.

Immigrant health care workers particularly fill roles as direct care workers, like home health and personal care aides. They fill shortages in rural areas, work nontraditional shifts and provide critical language and cultural knowledge that other health care workers don't have. And while the executive order gives an exception for green cards for medical professionals, it does not account for the other critical jobs that immigrants are filling right now.

A report by the New American Economy Research Fund found that "immigrant workers are essential" in securing the U.S. food supply chain, making up more than 1 in 5 workers in the U.S. food sector. Foreign-born workers make up 1 in 6 grocery store workers in this country, more than a quarter of food processing workers and more than a quarter of agriculture workers.

A Bloomberg News story warned that possible additional restrictions "could complicate planning for businesses and workers looking to rebound from the coronavirus." Additionally, a major category of people who are banned is those seeking to join their family member in the U.S. These are the parents, children and siblings of real people, with real stories, who desperately need their families during a time of unprecedented anxiety. It is simply unjust to penalize them—and their sponsoring U.S. citizen relatives who paid visa petition fees and have waited patiently for the years or even decades required by our backlogged family reunification system.

COVID-19, meanwhile, affects us all. It does not care what we have or don't have, where we come from, or how long we've been here. As humans, we are all vulnerable to it. The best, and perhaps the only, way to conquer the coronavirus is for all of us to work together, remaining united as one nation. This is how we save as many lives as possible and get to the other side of the crisis.

Whether they've been in the U.S. for months or a lifetime—or their families have been here for generations—doctors, nurses, home health aides, cleaners or janitors, cashiers, child care providers, delivery drivers and farmworkers are out there, responding to, helping contain and supporting us all through the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a time of pandemic, we are reminded of what matters, and that all of us carry an inherent dignity, as people made in the image of God. We have enough to fear; we don't need to fear each other.

MILLIONS

From Page 8

rules and qualified. But many of the smallest businesses were late to the party, because they didn't have working relationships with banks beyond making their weekly cash deposits. Some opted out because the criteria for loan forgiveness was unclear. Moreover, the loans only cover eight weeks of payroll plus limited expenses for rent and utilities. Many firms need assistance for more than eight weeks. What happens if after eight weeks a company has to lay off staff? Will the loan still be forgiven?

Worst of all, the program is far too small. The Trump administration announced earlier this month that the entire fund was committed. (Due to red tape, only a fraction of the money has been disbursed.) It took fewer than 2 million businesses out of 30 million nationwide to claim all of the money.

Congress is considering expanding the loan program by adding another $300 billion. It needs to add even more since that amount will also fall short. And it needs to move fast to get money to the most desperate businesses before they fail.

For the smallest businesses—those with a dozen or fewer employees—a non-bank funding mechanism is needed. Banks gave priority to preexisting clients, and they processed larger applications first. That left out many of the most desperate firms. Amanda Ballantyne, director of the Main Street Alliance, an advocacy group, suggests giving the smallest businesses direct grants from the Treasury.

The program needs more funds and at least a partial redesign. In 2008, many homeowners did share the blame for borrowing beyond their means. Even then, the fallout from letting so many fail was catastrophic. This time, small businesses are completely blameless.

Sheila Bair, former head of Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., who pushed hard for more help for homeowners in 2008, told me, "One lesson from the last crash is that saving Wall Street doesn't save Main Street."

We shouldn't make the same mistake again.

What ventilator crisis?

By RICH LOWRY
King Features Synd., Inc.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

At a coronavirus task force briefing at the beginning of April, White House adviser Jared Kushner explained the approach that would—as events proved—get the country through its ventilator crisis.

He was relentlessly pilloried, mocked and distorted in the press for it.

Kushner said at one point that states shouldn't be drawing on the federal stockpile just to hold ventilators in their own reserves. This led to a flurry of media criticism alleging that Kushner wanted to horde the federal ventilator stockpile.

Actually, the emphasis on data and shrewd allocation that Kushner discussed at the April 2 briefing has clearly worked.

At the outset, the country was looking at a daunting, perhaps impossible challenge. A chilling briefing at the Federal Emergency Management Agency early on posited that the U.S. could be short 130,000 ventilators by April 1. The federal government had about 16,000 ventilators in its stockpile.

A couple of insights drove the administration's effort to get its arms around the problem.

Officials realized, as one White House adviser puts it, that there was "too much guesstimating" going on. Many governors didn't know how many ventilators their states had and were acting on the normal impulse to have more than enough, just in case.

The administration created a data team. It used hospital billings to estimate how many ventilators were in each state and how many were being utilized, so it didn't have to depend on perhaps panicky, poorly informed requests from states.

Another important realization was that FEMA could do just-in-time delivery. This created a lot of flexibility. The administration could wait to see how things really played out, rather than make decisions based on projections weeks in the future.

The media portrayed it as a failure every time the administration gave a state a fraction of its request, but this was a key element of the strategy. If the administration had tried to meet New York's initial estimated need for 40,000 additional ventilators, for instance, everything would have gone out the door, and for no good reason.

Another insight was that most ventilators out in the country weren't being used, since virus hot spots are geographically limited. That meant there was a tremendous capacity to be tapped. This led to the Dynamic Ventilator Reserve. States and hospitals with a safe margin of ventilators not in use could lend them to places that needed them, with a federal guarantee that a hospital lending a ventilator would get a replacement in 24 or 48 hours if it turned out that it needed it back. This removed the fear and the risk of giving up ventilators.

To add to the nation's overall supply, FEMA acted quickly to get so-called notifications to purchase to ventilator manufacturers so they could start work and hold their inventory, which ensured it wasn't lost to foreign countries.

Last year, according to administration figures, the country produced 30,000 ventilators. This year, it's going to produce some 200,000, and they are already coming in. "We are going to be swimming in ventilators," a White House adviser said.

By any measure, that's a success, certainly compared with where we thought we'd be less than a month ago. If the media weren't so devoted to gotcha idiocy, more people might know about it.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Everyone should be tested!

First, kudos to the governor and his COVID-19 Task Force for a job well done. To say that I do not always agree with the governor would be an understatement, but a job well done is a job well done. Due to their guidance and sometimes arguably heavy-handedness, we are essentially free of COVID-19 in the Northern Marianas. All of that may be in jeopardy because United Airlines is resuming service from Guam, where they have not quite gotten a handle on containment yet.

Anyway, I went to get the free COVID-19 testing last Saturday and was appalled at how few people were there to avail themselves for testing. It took less than 10 minutes from approach at the first station to the end. The test itself took about 10 seconds. Given the anxiety that I have heard and read on social media, I would have thought the testing site would have been overwhelmed, and judging from the staffing I think the health care workers thought the same thing. But the entire time I was there only two cars were taking advantage of the services. I am beginning to think people in the CNMI just like to whine and complain.

It was necessary for me to go to Puerto Rico. On my way I was shocked to see that the traffic was just like it was pre-COVID-19. I am not sure what to think about that.

I think we have not had a new case of COVID-19 for some time. The last person was released from enforced quarantine four or five days ago, but despite what I said earlier in this piece about essentially being free of COVID-19, we cannot let our guard down! EVERYONE should be tested and EVERYONE should continue to follow the prescribed guidelines.

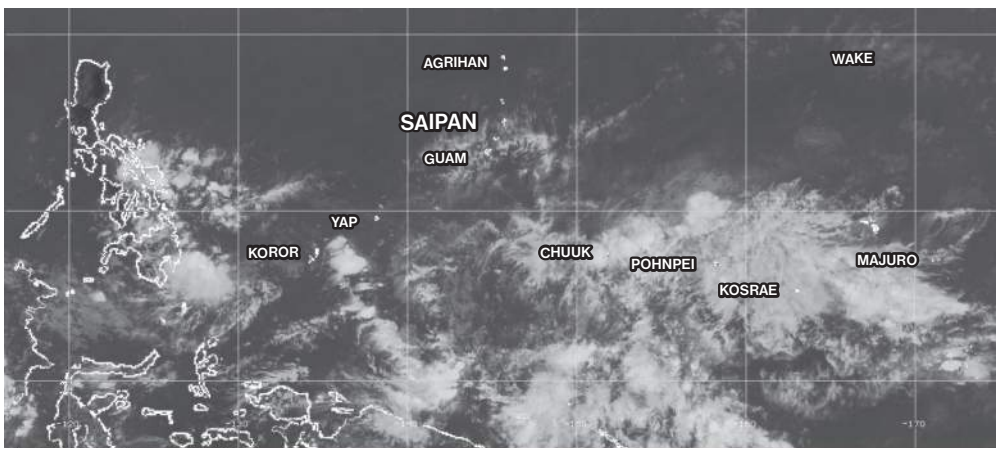
John Davis
Fina Sisu, Saipan

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
88° 77°	90° 78°	90° 78°	88° 78°	89° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:09 AM, SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows partly cloudy skies with isolated showers across the Marianas this morning. Trade winds are moderate, with combined seas of 4 to 6 feet at the buoys.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	89° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Yap	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Thunderstorms	63° / 52°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	81° / 54°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	84° / 77°
Honolulu	Windy	83° / 71°
London	Mostly Cloudy	66° / 45°
Los Angeles	Sunny	87° / 62°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	97° / 82°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	63° / 48°
Miami	Sunny	84° / 73°
New York	Showers	68° / 46°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	73° / 57°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	72° / 52°
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	68° / 54°
Rome	Sunny	75° / 54°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	88° / 64°
San Francisco	Sunny	65° / 50°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	73° / 52°
Tokyo	Showers	77° / 57°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	72° / 49°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:52 AM	6:35 PM
Tuesday	5:51 AM	6:35 PM
Wednesday	5:51 AM	6:35 PM
Thursday	5:51 AM	6:36 PM
Friday	5:50 AM	6:36 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:13 AM	3:26 PM
Tuesday	-	3:58 AM	4:25 PM
Wednesday	-	4:44 AM	5:26 PM
Thursday	-	5:31 AM	6:27 PM
Friday	-	6:21 AM	7:30 PM

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
5:14 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.07
11:29 AM	LOW TIDE	0.77
5:02 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.82
11:23 PM	LOW TIDE	0.38

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING AS OF APRIL 16, 2020

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
- ***Cashier & Customer Service***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 1:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4282
  Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org or via phone by calling toll free 1-(855)-729-2282

Department of Finance
- ***Division of Revenue & Taxation***
  CASHIER ONLY
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-1000
- ***Division of Customs Services***
  - ***Airport:*** OPEN DAILY
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Seaport:*** Monday - Friday
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Chalan Kanoa Post Office:***
    Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
    Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
- CASHIER ONLY
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54

Saipan Zoning Office
- *Available via phone only*
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9661/2/3
  Email: yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp
  Call or email for more information

Department of Public Works
- ***Solid Waste Management Division***
  - ***Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill***
    Open all week except Wednesday
    7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 322-2745

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
- Eligibility staff via phone only
  Tuesday - Thursday from 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
  Accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal/ redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- *Available via phone or email only on Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays from*
  9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-6537/38
  Email: maryann@ovrgov.net

Office of the Attorney General
- ***Civil & Criminal Divisions***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 237-7500/7600

Office of the Public Defender
- Monday - Friday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-6503

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GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING AS OF APRIL 16, 2020

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs

- ***Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)***
  Accepting Calls From Existing Customers Only
  Tel: (670) 287-1475
- ***Division of Youth Services (DYS) On-Call***
  Saipan: (670) 285-2780 / 287-2781 / 287-1773
  Tinian: (670) 287-3268
  Rota: (670) 287-2553
- ***Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)***
  For inquiries regarding parent eligibility requirements for CCDF Program:
  Tel: (670) 783-8571 / (670) 783-8572
  Email: dccajguerrero@gmail.com / ccdf.jrosario@gmail.com
- ***Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture (CCAC)***
  For Recovery Arts Grant Application Submissions. Grant Guidelines are available at http://www.cnmiartscouncil.org
  Tel.: (670) 287-4585
  Email: parkeryobei@gmail.com
- ***Historic Preservation Office (HPO)***
  For Processing of Federal 106 Consultations Call
  Tel: (670) 789-1986
  Email: rchong.cnmihpo@gmail.com
- ***Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP)***
  Benefit Pick Up: Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

  Application Pick Up: Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

  Application Submission:
  Anytime via Drop-Box

  Application Inquiries:
  Tel: (670) 237-2801/2802

  To download the NAP application and other forms go to dcca.gov.mp
  Email: support@cnminap.gov.mp

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Business

D'Elegance remains open in time of COVID-19

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

D'Elegance Café in Garapan is now open from 8am to 6pm.

KRIZEL TUAZON

For those not in the know, D'Elegance Café in Garapan has not shut down and continues to operate daily.

D'Elegance Café's Emily Cabrera said that, like all businesses on the islands, they are also hurting since the COVID-19 pandemic affected the CNMI but they have remained open for the benefit of their regular customers. "We never closed to cater to our regular customers even though we don't have much profit," she said.

When the government first imposed social distancing measures and the original curfew, D'Elegance Café reduced its operating hours from 8am to 10pm to 8am to 2pm. With the more relaxed curfew, the restaurant is now open from 8am to 6pm.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
D'Elegance Café's kare kare.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Jullie's BBQ's pork barbecue.

Aside from loss in sales, the restaurant has also cut the hours of its employees, Cabrera said. "Sales are down 60% and some employees are out of the job or work much [fewer] hours. …It depends on their expertise needed in the restaurant."

D'Elegance Café currently offers only take-out service and only one customer at a time could enter the restaurant to adhere to the government's social distancing measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

For more information and for pre-orders, call D'Elegance Café at 234-9227

D'Elegance Café's daily menu is posted every morning on the restaurant's Facebook page, and Cabrera said the restaurant's bestsellers like sisig, kare-kare, adobo, beef steak, fritada and the regular soups like sinigang, tinola, and nilaga continue to be popular with their to-go customers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
D'Elegance Café's fritada.

Its menu also remains at pre-COVID-19 prices as two-choice meals are still $6.75, one choice is $4.75, and any additional sides is $3.50. The order comes with rice and complimentary soup.

"We thank our loyal customers that they continue to patronage the restaurant even after COVID-19 has made our lives hard. We only do take-outs currently and we only allow one customer at a time. We also want our customers to use precautionary measures like wearing a mask as soon as they enter the premises," said Cabrera.

For more information and for pre-orders, call D'Elegance Café at 234-9227 or contract them through their Facebook page.

Cabrera also reminded loyal customers that Jullie's BBQ, D'Elegance Café's barbecue stand, has also remained open and is ready to serve from 2pm to 6pm daily. Items include $1 per stick of chicken or pork barbecue, $9.95 for a whole chicken, and $5.25 for a half-chicken. For more information or for pre-order, call Jullie's BBQ at 234-9226.

Farmers markets scaling down with eye on safety due to virus

DETROIT (AP)—Johnny Gyergyou has been selling his farm's meat, poultry and eggs at a Detroit farmers market for more than a decade, but like many of his regular shoppers, he's been staying home in recent weeks to wait out the coronavirus crisis.

Gyergyou, 72, said the crowds at Eastern Market just aren't big enough to make it cost-effective for his typical 33-mile (53-kilometer) Saturday trips into the city from his farm in Berlin Township.

"We've been doing fairly well (selling) at the farm. It's not Eastern Market sales by no means, but at least it's helping us along here," said Gyergyou, who added that he's heard other vendors say they were scared to sell in Detroit, which has been hit particularly hard by the coronavirus.

Farmers, growers and operators of open-air markets are heading into one of their busiest times of year while facing the added challenge of the coronavirus. The disease has led to stay-at-home orders and the closure of nonessential businesses in many places, and has killed more than 60,000 people in the U.S. and at least 230,000 worldwide.

Shoppers venturing to farmers markets this spring are likely to see a lot fewer vendors and fellow customers. The ones they do see will be taking precautions to guard against the spread of COVID-19, such as the wearing of face masks and frequent use of hand sanitizer. Many markets have already taken other steps, including turning to drive-thru shopping, reducing their hours of operation and using fencing for crowd control.

Nearly all of the hundreds of Saturday morning shoppers at Eastern Market wore masks and there was ample spaces between vendors.

"Three weeks ago, it was nearly empty," said Carrie Simpson, 48, of Wyandotte outside of Detroit.

Saturday was her fourth visit to the market since fears of the virus forced businesses to close and people to stay home. Simpson bought eggs, plants and herbs and said she drives to Gyergyou's livestock farm for her meats.

"I want to support the farmers. Their sales are down," she said.

The farmers market in Overland Park, Kansas, has been relocated to the city's convention center, where patrons drive past vendors who bring produce to their vehicles. About 35 vendors participated on April 25 and vehicles were at the gate when the market opened at 8 a.m. About 700 drove through before a 2 p.m. closing, said Meg Ralph, a city spokeswoman.

In Vermont, officials are requiring all farmers markets to be held outdoors and have banned entertainment, children's activities and cooking demonstrations to prevent people from congregating in small spaces. The Bennington Farmers' Market was scheduled to reopen on Saturday as a pre-order drive-thru market. And in the state's quaint capital city of Montpelier, the Capital City Market was prepared for pre-order pickups and in-person shoppers, with no more than 10 people allowed in the market at a time. Vendors must be spaced 12 feet apart and wear face coverings and gloves.

US allows use of 1st drug shown to help virus recovery

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. regulators on Friday allowed emergency use of the first drug that appears to help some COVID-19 patients recover faster, a milestone in the global search for effective therapies against the coronavirus.

The Food and Drug Administration cleared Gilead Science's intravenous drug for hospitalized patients with "severe disease," such as those experiencing breathing problems requiring supplemental oxygen or ventilators.

President Donald Trump announced the news at the White House alongside Gilead CEO Daniel O'Day and Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Hahn.

"This was lightning speed in terms of getting something approved" said Hahn, calling the drug "an important clinical advance."

The FDA acted after preliminary results from a government-sponsored study showed that the drug, remdesivir, shortened the time to recovery by 31%, or about four days on average, for hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

Those given the drug were able to leave the hospital in 11 days on average vs. 15 days for the comparison group. The drug may also help avert deaths, but that effect is not yet large enough for scientists to know for sure.

Dr. Sameer Khanijo, a critical care specialist, said he wants to see additional studies to clarify the drug's benefit.

"I don't think this is a cure yet, but I think it's starting to point us in the right direction," said Khanijo of North Shore University Hospital in New York. "As a society it's nice to have something that will help stem the tide of this disease."

The FDA said preliminary results from the government study warranted Friday's decision, though regulators acknowledged "there is limited information known about the safety and effectiveness of using remdesivir."

Nation

With quirks and restrictions, many states lift lockdowns

GRETNA, La. (AP)—More than a dozen states let restaurants, stores or other businesses reopen Friday in the biggest one-day push yet to get their economies up and running again, acting at their own speed and with their own quirks and restrictions to make sure the coronavirus doesn't come storming back.

People in Louisiana could eat at restaurants again but had to sit outside at tables 10 feet (3 meters) apart with no waiter service. Maine residents could attend church services as long as they stayed in their cars. And a Nebraska mall reopened with plexiglass barriers and hand-sanitizing stations but few shoppers.

"I feel like I just got out of jail!" accountant Joy Palermo exclaimed as she sat down with a bacon-garnished bloody Mary at the Gretna Depot Cafe outside New Orleans.

Meanwhile, the first drug shown to help fight COVID-19 won emergency approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In a major study, remdesivir shortened patients' recovery time from 15 days to 11 on average and may have also reduced deaths.

The virus has killed more than 230,000 people worldwide, including over 64,000 in the U.S. and more than 20,000 each in Italy, Britain, France and Spain, forcing lockdowns that have shuttered factories and businesses, thrown tens of millions out of work and throttled the world's economies.

AP

A customer eats inside the Horseshoe Cafe Friday, May 1, 2020, in Wickenburg, Ariz. A few small businesses reopened in defiance of Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey's decision to extend a statewide stay-at-home order for another two weeks in.

President Donald Trump said Friday that he's hoping the total number of COVID-19 deaths in the United States will be below 100,000, which he acknowledged is a "horrible number." Trump's predictions of the expected U.S. death toll have changed over time, with his earlier 60,000 projection now being eclipsed. But he said at a White House event that "maybe millions of lives" have been saved by shutting down the economy.

With the crisis stabilizing in Europe and in many places in the U.S., countries and states are gradually easing their restrictions amid warnings from health experts that a second wave of infections could hit unless testing for the virus is expanded dramatically.

In much of Colorado, people could get their hair cut and shop at stores again, though stay-at-home orders remained in place in Denver and surrounding counties. Wyoming let barbershops, nail salons, gyms and daycare centers reopen. In Maine, golf courses, hairdressers and dentists opened.

Hotels near South Carolina beaches opened and state parks unlocked their gates for the first time in more than a month. But in Myrtle Beach, the state's most popular tourist destination, hotel elevators will be restricted to one person or one family—a potential inconvenience at the area's 15- and 20-story resorts.

Texas' reopening got underway with sparse crowds at shopping malls and restaurants allowing customers to dine in, though only at 25% capacity in most places. A video posted on social media showed a city park ranger in Austin getting shoved into the water Thursday while asking people in a crowd to keep 6 feet (2 meters) apart from each other. Police charged a 25-year-old man with attempted assault.

At Gattuso's Restaurant in Gretna, Louisiana, Kent and Doris Alimia and their daughters, Molly and Emily, celebrated Molly Alimia's 22nd birthday at one of the outdoor tables, which were screened by plants in wooden planters 5 feet high.

"It's a nice change of scenery to actually get out of the house," Molly Alimia said.

Outside Omaha, Nebraska, Jasmine Ramos was among a half-dozen shoppers wandering the open-air Nebraska Crossing mall. Most wore masks.

"I do think it's a little soon, but it's kind of slow and there aren't a lot of people here, so I'm not too worried," Ramos said.

Back in session: Senate risks a return but House stays away

WASHINGTON (AP)—Weighing the risks, the Senate will reopen on Monday as the coronavirus crisis rages and the House stays shuttered, an approach that leaves Congress as divided as the nation.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's decision to convene 100 senators at the Capitol during a pandemic gives President Donald Trump the imagery he wants of America getting back to work, despite health worries and a lack of testing.

Yet, the Washington region remains under stay-at-home orders as a virus hot spot. Gathering senators for the first time since March risks lawmakers as well the cooks, cleaners, police officers and other workers who keep the lights on at the Capitol complex.

"We will continue to stand together for the American people—even as we stand 6 feet apart," McConnell said ahead of the opening.

Trump himself offered Congress access to the instant virus test system used to screen visitors to the White House. But in an extraordinary rebuff, McConnell and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a statement Saturday that they would "respectfully decline" the offer and instead direct resources to the front lines "where they can do the most good."

For Senate Republicans, returning to session is an attempt to set the terms of debate as Democrats push for another pricey coronavirus relief bill. Frustrated after Pelosi boosted Democratic priorities in earlier aid packages, an unprecedented $3 trillion in emergency spending, they are resisting more. Republicans are counting on the country's reopening and an economic rebound as their best hope to limit a new round of big spending on virus aid.

As the Senate gavels in and the 430-member House stays away on the Capitol physician's advice, the Congress provides a snapshot of divided America struggling to confront the COVID-19 crisis. Some states are reopening, others are staying closed and questions abound.

Senators face few new rules for operating in the pandemic beyond the recommendations that they wear masks—blue face coverings will be available for free—keep their distance and leave most staff at home. Hand sanitizer is back in stock. But public access will be limited, including at public hearings. The Capitol itself remains closed to visitors and tours.

Democrats complain they are returning to a noticeably light agenda, packed with confirmation hearings for Trump's judicial and executive branch nominees, but with little emphasis on the pandemic and Great Depression-level economic collapse.

"Democrats are going to fight like hell," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said on a conference call with Latino leaders. "We're going to make sure people have enough money to live and get back on their feet."

Court weighs in on applying mass gathering ban to churches

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)—A federal appeals court on Saturday declined to block the Kentucky governor's temporary ban on massing gatherings from applying to in-person religious services.

The three-judge panel did clear the way for Maryville Baptist Church to hold drive-in worship services while adhering to public health requirements. That's an alternative that Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear has strongly encouraged throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

But the panel stopped short of applying its order to in-person worship services.

The ruling came soon after the church asked the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for an emergency order stopping Beshear's mass gathering ban from being enforced against religious services.

"We realize that this falls short of everything the church has asked for and much of what it wants,"' the Cincinnati-based appeals court panel said Saturday. "But that is all we are comfortable doing after the 24 hours the plaintiffs have given us with this case.

It urged a federal district judge to "prioritize resolution" of the church's claims in its lawsuit.

Beshear recently announced that places of worship in Kentucky will be able to once again hold in-person services starting May 20. It's part of a broader plan to gradually reopen the state's economy. Exceptions to his shutdown order include trips to the grocery store, bank, pharmacy and hardware store.

In Saturday's opinion, the judges took note of those "secular exceptions."

"The breadth of the ban on religious services, together with a haven for numerous secular exceptions, should give pause to anyone who prizes religious freedom," the panel wrote, before concluding "it's not always easy to decide what is Caesar's and what is God's—and that's assuredly true in the context of a pandemic."

The ruling supports what Beshear has said all along, according to his spokeswoman, Crystal Staley.

"The governor has allowed and even encouraged hundreds of drive-in services across Kentucky," she said in a statement Saturday. "What the Sixth Circuit decided is that drive-in services are okay, but the governor's order prohibiting in-person services remains in effect. That has been the governor's exact policy since the beginning."

Maryville Baptist Church's attorneys—from the Liberty Counsel, a conservative Christian group—cited passages from the ruling in claiming a "stellar victory." The group claims Beshear's order violates constitutional protections and Kentucky law.

"The laws of the commonwealth and the Constitution are not suspended during a crisis or a pandemic," said Liberty Counsel Founder and Chairman Mat Staver.

The appeals court panel said Beshear's orders have "several potential hallmarks of discrimination."

World

End of lockdown to uncork pent-up mourning for the lost

PARIS (AP)—As body after body has passed through his rubber-gloved hands, sealed in double-layered bags for disposal, Paris undertaker Franck Vasseur has become increasingly concerned about the future after the coronavirus pandemic.

All these people ferried in his hearse to cremations that their loved ones couldn't attend: when will they be mourned?

All these lives cut short: how will they be celebrated?

With lockdowns easing and people thawing out their on-hold lives, Vasseur suspects the enormity of so much loss will now start to sink in, unleashing pent-up grief that couldn't be fully comprehended and expressed when everyone was sealed away.

The homes of the dead will have to be visited. Belongings must be gathered up and heirlooms shared out. Commemorations that couldn't be held when large gatherings were banned need organizing. Ashes await collection in funeral parlors. Held-back tears will be shed.

Mimicking the motion of handing over an urn, Vasseur imagines the shock that awaits those who will have to be told: "Here, this is your mother or father who was in full health, who was watching television or you were chatting with 15 days ago."

"You get handed an urn and you cannot imagine for a single second the transition between when you were told that they had been infected by the virus and their death," he said in an interview at his funeral parlor, L'Autre Rive.

The name translates as "The Other Shore," conjuring up imagery of the River Styx that separated the living from the underworld in Greek mythology. The store has a majestic round wood table where, in better times, Vasseur and his clients would spend hours making funeral arrangements, talking about the departed.

"This is where the process of grieving starts," he said.

In lockdown, Vasseur says his job became "completely different," a procession of death, disposal and paperwork, of days spent shuttling bodies from A to B, of waiting in line with other hearses and dealing by phone and email with locked-down families he could no longer comfort in person.

"For all these families, what impact will this have on the process of mourning?" he wonders.

"There may well be a grey zone in people's minds," he said. "Like a blackout."

Because bodies had to be sealed in coffins, their loved ones couldn't give them a tender last look or caress. And people locked down outside Paris felt that because of the stay-home rules, police patrols and travel permits that had to be shown to them, it wasn't wise to break quarantine.

"They said, 'Send us a photo of mother in her coffin.' So they could visualize the deceased and their departure," Vasseur said.

Some families sent tokens of affection, messages, cuddly toys for Vasseur to put in the coffin. He sent them back photos taken with his mobile phone.

Some are in denial.

"They have already asked me: 'Are you sure that she was cremated? Is she really dead? I don't believe it. It's not true,'" he said.

"All that means that they are going to have huge difficulties moving ahead with the process of grieving," he said. "I think it's going to be complicated for a lot of people."

Kim reappears in public, ending absence amid health rumors

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un made his first public appearance in 20 days as he celebrated the completion of a fertilizer factory near Pyongyang, state media said Saturday, ending an absence that had triggered global rumors that he may be seriously ill.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, reported that Kim attended the ceremony Friday in Sunchon with other senior officials, including his sister Kim Yo Jong, who many analysts predict would take over if her brother is suddenly unable to rule.

State media showed videos and photos of Kim wearing a black Mao suit and constantly smiling, walking around facilities, applauding, cutting a huge red ribbon with a scissor handed by his sister, and smoking inside and outside of buildings while talking with other officials.

Seemingly thousands of workers, many of them masked, stood in lines at the massive complex, roaring in celebration and releasing balloons into the air. A sign installed on a stage where Kim sat with other senior officials read: "Sunchon Phosphatic Fertilizer Factory; Completion Ceremony; May 1, 2020."

There was no definite sign that Kim was in discomfort, although there were moments where his walking looked a bit stiff. He was shown moving without a walking stick, like the one he used in 2014 when he was recovering from a presumed ankle surgery. However, he was also seen riding a green electric cart, which appeared similar to a vehicle he used in 2014.

It was Kim's first public appearance since April 11, when he presided over a ruling Workers' Party meeting to discuss the coronavirus and reappoint his sister as an alternate member of the powerful decision-making Political Bureau of the party's Central Committee. That move confirmed her substantial role in the government.

North Korea has said it hasn't had a single virus case, but the claim is questioned by many outside experts.

It wasn't immediately clear what had caused Kim's absence.

Speculation about his health swirled after he missed the April 15 birthday celebration for his late grandfather Kim Il Sung, the country's most important holiday, for the first time since taking power in 2011.

The possibility of high-level instability raised troubling questions about the future of the secretive, nuclear-armed country that has been steadily building an arsenal meant to threaten the U.S. mainland while diplomacy between Kim and President Donald Trump has stalled.

"I, for one, am glad to see he is back, and well!" Trump tweeted Saturday.

★ DEATH & FUNERAL ANNOUCEMENT ★

†ANTONIO CEPEDA TOMOKANE

LOVINGLY KNOWN AS "MITCH"
BORN TO LIFE JULY 04, 1934 CALLED TO ETERNAL LIFE APRIL 27, 2020

In his new life, he joins his:
Parents: †Jose Sadao Tomokane
†Dolores Cepeda Tomokane
Son: †Antonio C. Tomokane, Jr.
Parents in-law: †Manuel Blas Blanco
†Asuncion Cabrera Blanco
Brother and Sisters: †Francisca C. Tomokane
†Jose C. Tomokane "Boya"
†Mariana C. Tomokane
Brothers in-law: †Roman C. Blanco, †Carlos C. Blanco
†Francisco (Jerry) Villanueva
Great-Grand Daughter: †Aleiya Rozae T. Brennan

His spirit and memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Jovita Blanco Tomokane

Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren:
Zelma T. & Ronald T. Benavente: Jovina and Ignatius Thomas Dela Cruz (Miana Dolores) Jalayne Benavente and Rico Camacho
Gina Lynn B. Tomokane: Jourdon Tomokane and Donovan Brennan (Leighton Jayce, †Aleiya Rozae & Vayda Brielle)
†Antonio C. Tomokane, Jr.: Kevin Ada and Surina Reyes (Kolten Bronx), Kyle Weidner and Jami Starling (Oliver, Skyler & Kylie), Tioni Alvarez and Elijah Aughenbaugh (Jahcobi Bryson)
Jeffrey B. & Michelle H. Tomokane: (Brandon John, Abbigelle Joy, Ethan Jayce & Chace Jaret)

Reared Children: Jose C.Tomokane, Dorsha J. Moreno and Ray Anthony R. Cabrera

Sisters In-Law: Orfa B. & Larry Deck
Ema B. Johnson
Basilisa (Sally) B. Villanueva

Caregivers: Juliet Pineda
Jefferson Cordova
Manny Camacho

He will be greatly missed by numerous nieces, nephews, godchildren, relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. His remains will lie in state at Nuestra Senora dela Paz Memorial Chapel, beginning at 8:00 am to 10:00 am. Memorial and prayer services will commence at 10:00 am followed by Interment Services at CNMI Veterans Cemetery, Marpi, Saipan where he will be at a peaceful rest. For viewing and visitation, please observe social distancing, wear facial cover/mask. Visitation will be limited to 6 persons at a time. Your cooperation and understanding are greatly appreciated.

Thank you - Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

Jovita Magdalena Blanco Tomokane, Children and Family

Health & Wellness

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DREAMSTIME/TNS

Feeling sluggish in quarantine? You can hop on a bike, perform some yoga, jump rope or follow fitness trainers who lead orkouts online.

How to strengthen your resolve to exercise during quarantine

By JEFF STRICKLER
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

The COVID-19 quarantine has left our routines in shambles, including our exercise routines. Without the structure provided by a daily schedule, it's easy to have workout sessions fall by the wayside.

Consider the office worker who normally unwinds from a long day of staring at a computer screen by swinging past the gym on their way home to jump on an elliptical machine or take a yoga class. But when working at home, there are many other things that provide escape. You can catch up with a TV show you missed. You can play tug of war with the dog. Or you can just veg out.

So how do we keep motivated to exercise when plopping on the couch and eating ice cream is so tantalizing?

For starters, give up the notion that the inspiration to exercise is going to sweep over you like a sweaty tsunami.

"Stop waiting for or looking for a 'feeling' of motivation," said Tom Nikkola, vice president of Nutrition and Virtual Training at Life Time. "Like many other feelings, feeling motivated is something that comes and goes."

"Exercise," he said "needs to be a nonnegotiable if we want to stick with it. That's especially the case right now for those of us sheltering in place. We're surrounded by the comforts of home, and if exercise isn't a nonnegotiable, we'll talk ourselves out of it.

"We don't need motivation when exercise is a nonnegotiable."

One of the best ways to create an exercise mandate is to make an appointment with yourself, said Jennifer Menk, senior director of Health and Well-Being for the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities.

"You should be very intentional about it," she said. "You should dedicate time in your schedule for it. Schedule a workout just like you schedule a meeting. And if you can, do it the same time every day. It's important to be consistent."

It also helps to be consistent in where you work out.

"If it's possible, you should set up an exercise area," Menk said. "It doesn't have to be a big area. Just a place where you can say, 'This is where I do stretches' or 'This is where I jump rope.'?"

During the quarantine, the vast majority of fitness centers are offering online training sessions (some require club membership, but others are open to everyone). Offerings cover the gamut from strenuous boot camps to soothing meditation sessions. Both Nikkola and Menk highly recommend them. (To see a list of Twin Cities clubs' offerings, go to strib.mn/2Vvyy0U.)

"You don't feel so alone," Menk said. "You can tell who else is there. There can be 40 or more of us there."

This is motivating for people who enjoy the social aspect of workout classes.

"You get energized when you're around other people actively pursuing health and fitness," Nikkola said. "Nothing is as effective as that live community. However, that's not possible for most of us right now. For now, connecting with others online who are committed to health and fitness helps you shape your thinking and behavior.

"One other benefit of finding an online health and fitness community is that the conversations tend to be more positive. Where there's so much negativity and divisiveness online, pursuing fitness has a unifying effect on us."

A classic piece of motivational advice is to have a workout partner whose presence makes you less likely to skip a session. Social distancing makes that difficult, but there are workarounds.

"You can have an accountability partner," Menk said. "This is someone you can check in with" to report when you have worked out. And if you like a little challenge, you can compete to see who works out more.

If you lack discipline, it's helpful to find a partner who won't buy lame excuses.

"If you have a tendency to make poor health choices, you need someone to call you out on it with a certain level of candor," Nikkola said. "It doesn't feel good, but when you have someone who won't let you lean on your excuses, you'll be more likely to stop leaning on them."

Many of the motivational steps that worked pre-quarantine still can be effective: Vary your exercise routine to avoid boredom. Keep a workout log ("What is tracked is done," Menk said). Set a series of smaller, achievable goals instead of a big, pie-in-the-sky objective. And speaking of pie, "Earn the food you eat," Nikkola said.

Need one more incentive? With all the emotional turmoil that has come with the COVID-19 pandemic, working out is more important than ever.

Exercise relieves stress and anxiety, Menk said. "There's no doubt about it—you benefit mentally as much or even more than you do physically."

MAYO CLINIC Q&A Plan for healthy meals, fewer trips to the grocery store during pandemic

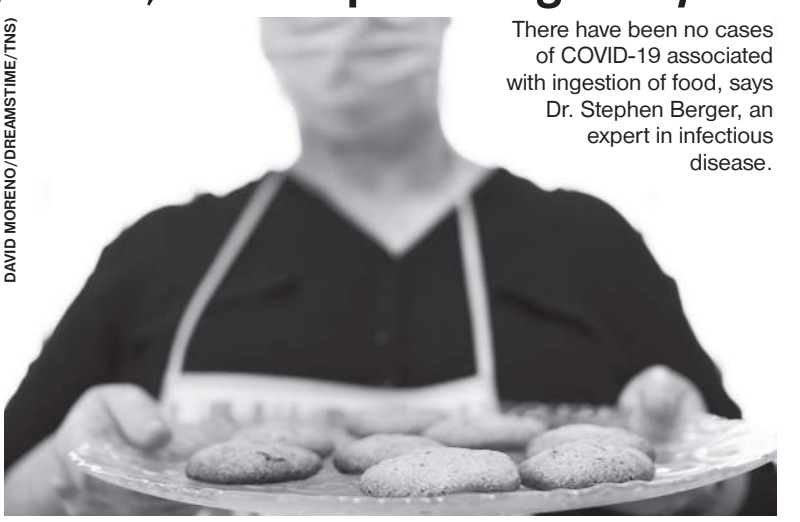
DEAR MAYO CLINIC: During the COVID-19 outbreak, I'm trying to limit trips to the grocery store. But I want to continue to eat healthy meals. What foods should I consider stocking up on, knowing that I probably won't be buying anything fresh for a couple of weeks?

ANSWER: Most people are in the habit of stopping by the grocery store at least once a week—and sometimes more often if we run out of a favorite item, decide to make a new dish or just want something fresh. So planning a shopping trip for groceries that will cover two weeks of meals and offer lots of healthy options may be daunting. But with careful planning, and some adjustments to the way you shop for and store your groceries, it can be done.

As COVID-19 continues to spread, social distancing—putting space between yourself and others to reduce the spread of illness—has become commonplace. That, along with the need for many people to self-quarantine for several weeks and shelter-in-place orders going into effect in some areas, has eliminated most quick grocery trips. The challenge of getting all the food you need for an extended time also is compounded by the fact that many other people are trying to do the same, so supplies of certain items may be limited.

As you think about how to tackle your grocery shopping, take time to plan. Check your pantry, refrigerator and freezer. Consider how you can use the items that you already have, so your shopping focuses on what you really need and will use. Confirm that you have staple items, such as flour and sugar.

When you make your grocery list, consider your new routines, your family and the meals you'll eat. For example, if you have children home from school, you'll need more supplies for lunches than usual. Peanut butter for sandwiches is a good staple that's easy to store. Lunch foods such as bread, cheese and deli meat freeze well, so buy extra and freeze what you don't need right away.



DAVID MORENO/DREAMSTIME/TNS

There have been no cases of COVID-19 associated with ingestion of food, says Dr. Stephen Berger, an expert in infectious disease.

Other fresh foods can be frozen and used later, as well, without losing their nutritional benefits. For example, fresh berries, bananas and other fruits can be frozen then thawed and used in smoothies. Meats such as beef, chicken and fish will last for about four months in the freezer.

As an alternative to picking all fresh foods, buying frozen options from the store can be a good choice when you want to stretch what you have over time. Frozen fruits and vegetables can be a healthy part of your meal planning. Because these items typically are frozen at their peak of freshness and undergo minimal processing before they are packaged, they retain their nutritional value.

If fresh or frozen items are in limited supply in your store, try shelf-stable alternatives. You can buy egg whites in cartons if you can't find eggs. Powdered milk, and canned fruits and vegetables, also serve as suitable alternatives that have the benefit of lasting longer over time. Eggs, for instance, often have three weeks to a month of use. Egg whites in a carton, however, can be used for about six to eight weeks.

Make sure to check the expiration dates on the items you buy to see how long they can be stored before use.

As you make decisions about what to buy for an extended period at home, be realistic about what you really need. Don't panic and purchase too many items. Buy foods you commonly use and that you know your family will eat. And even if you have to buy brands or alternatives that are different than usual for you, stay focused on the foundations of a healthy diet: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats. ***(Mayo Clinic News Network/TNS)***

Debra Silverman, M.S., RDN, LD/N, Dietetics, Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Florida

Life & Style

Mountain top: Game of Thrones actor sets deadlift record

KOPAVOGUR, Iceland (AP)—The Mountain is at the top of the deadlift world.

"Game of Thrones" actor Hafthor Bjornsson, who played Gregor "The Mountain" Clegane in the HBO series, set a deadlift world record by lifting 501 kilograms (1,104 pounds) on Saturday.

Bjornsson, the 2018 World's Strongest Man, made the successful attempt at Thor's Power Gym in his native Iceland.

"I believe today I could've done more, but what's the point?" the 31-year-old Bjornsson told ESPN. "I'm happy with this."

Eddie Hall set the previous record in 2016 at the World Deadlift Championships, with the Englishman lifting 500 kilos (1,102 pounds).

Promoter who ordered 50 Cent's friend killed loses appeal

NEW YORK (AP)—The conviction of a former hip-hop and rap promoter who ordered the killing of a friend of 50 Cent was upheld Friday.

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed that James Rosemond was properly convicted of murder-for-hire charges.

Rosemond was accused of hiring a crew to kill an associate of the rap group G-Unit as payback for an assault on Rosemond's son. The associate, Lodi Mack, was killed in the Bronx in 2009.

His lawyer had argued that witnesses against him were only trying to reduce their own sentences.

The first ended in a mistrial with a hung jury. Rosemond was convicted at his second trial and sentenced to life in prison, but the judge was later found to have erred on one point, and a third trial was ordered. That also resulted in a conviction and life sentence, which Rosemond appealed.

He already was serving two life sentences for separate drug and gun convictions.

No soft landing for Biden on 'Morning Joe' interview

NEW YORK (AP)—If Joe Biden was looking for a soft landing place to address sexual assault allegations made by a former Senate staffer, he didn't find it Friday on MSNBC's "Morning Joe."

The 20-minute interview of the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee conducted by Mika Brzezinski was blunt and frequently uncomfortable, a milestone media moment in the 2020 campaign.

The former vice president had faced increased pressure to publicly address the accusations by Tara Reade that he had assaulted her in the early 1990s, which he has consistently denied. During the interview, Biden said "it never, never happened."

AP

This video framegrab image from MSNBC's Morning Joe, shows Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speaking to co-host Mika Brzezinski, Friday, May 1, 2020.

The New York Times, Washington Post and Associated Press have all done ultimately inconclusive investigations of the charges. Biden opponents say others in the media have been slow to report on them.

Much like President Donald Trump concentrates his interviews on Fox News Channel, Biden came to a network stocked with supportive opinion hosts. Brzezinski and her co-host, Joe Scarborough, have been blistering in daily coverage of Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

When another MSNBC host, Chris Hayes, discussed Reade's accusations earlier this week, there was an immediate call for his firing on Twitter by Biden supporters who thought that they didn't deserve the public airing.

Despite that backdrop, Brzezinski didn't pull punches. She graphically described the charges against Biden and asked him to "go on record with the American people. Did you sexually assault Tara Reade?"

Biden repeated his denial of the accusation.

Brzezinski honed in on a Biden quote made during the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, that women who make charges of sexual assault should be treated with the presumption that the essence of what they're talking about is real.

"I'm going to try and ask many different ways," she said.

Alaska book ban vote draws attention of hometown rockers

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Members of the Grammy-winning rock band Portugal. The Man are stepping into a banned book controversy in their Alaska home town.

After the school board at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District in Palmer voted 5-2 last week to remove five classics used for high school English elective courses including F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," "Joseph Heller's Catch-22" and Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," the band announced it would buy the books for any student or parent who wanted them.

The other two books are "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison and "The Things They Carried" by Tim O'Brien.

The books are controversial because of sexual references and descriptions of rape and incest, "things that are pretty serious problems, especially in our teenage world," said board member Jeff Taylor, a Wasilla business owner who voted in favor of the ban.

Portugal. The Man guitarist Eric Howk was surprised to learn of the decision in the district north of Anchorage where the band members attended school, he KTVA-TV reported.

AP

In this Jan. 28, 2018 file photo, Zachary Carothers, left, and fellow members of the band Portugal. The Man accept the award for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance for 'Feel It Still' at the 60th annual Grammy Awards at Madison Square Garden in New York.

"We were all students of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough school district and we have a lot of teachers there that we love," Howk said.

"I think when it comes to stories and to books, we're storytellers. You know, we're songwriters and we're storytellers and we take the situations and the experiences and the people that we meet and we kind of turn those into the stories that we carry on with us to the next place and to the next town. Storytelling is just kind of sacred to us and it just hits really close to home."

Weight loss frees woman from mind-numbing drugs

DEAR ABBY: I had weight-loss surgery a year ago. I'm now off all medications (high blood pressure, antidepressants, etc.) and take only one multivitamin daily. I feel like I'm 25 again. However, I have also changed mentally. After many years of being a zombie on antidepressants, I feel like I have finally "awakened."

I come from a dysfunctional, abusive childhood. My father abused my mother. I was diagnosed with dysthymia years ago, and I feel the diagnosis was correct. I now feel my dysthymia has turned more into anxiety than depression. I'm no longer afraid of speaking up and, after 20 years, I actually have opinions of my own.

Needless to say, my family (husband, grown children and in-laws) are not used to this side of me. I find myself feeling resentful, anxious and envious of certain immediate family and in-law family dynamics now. I don't want to upset my family by being so vocal and opinionated, but I don't want to get back on mind-altering prescriptions either. I also have little faith that counseling will do much good. I'm afraid I'll be pushed into taking meds again. I feel like I'm between a rock and a hard place right now. Any advice?

A TOUGH SPOT IN NORTH CAROLINA

DEAR TOUGH SPOT: Keeping in mind that no one can force you back on medications if you don't want them, I do think you could benefit from talking with a licensed mental health professional about this. You have made major changes in your life, and are no longer the person you were when you were prescribed the medications that made you feel like a zombie. A mental health professional can help you to sort out whether you have a problem or whether your family members do in dealing with the new you.

DEAR ABBY: In the future when I am able, I would like to travel with a mix of single and married ladies. I'm in a committed relationship, and when I discussed this with my partner, we had a difference of opinion.

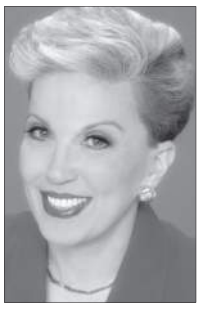
She believes that happy individuals in committed relationships do not travel with other people. She believes happy couples should travel together and not independently. Is that controlling? I have traveled independently in prior committed relationships, and this has never been an issue.

Should I honor her request or deny it? She is pushing me to respect this rule and says it applies to her as well because she believes "females" let loose when they are away from their significant others. I get the distinct feeling that if I travel independently, there will be an emotional price to pay, or she will do something in my absence that will change the dynamics of our relationship.

LOVE OR CONTROL

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

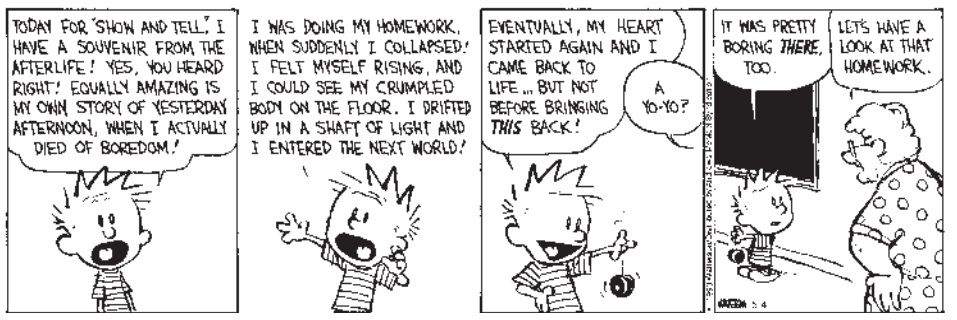
DEAR LOVE: There are already issues that will change the dynamics of your relationship—your partner's insecurity and need to control, and your need for some freedom. Unless you are laying down "rules" for her to follow as she is trying to do to you, step back and take a second look at this relationship. Healthy people who love each other want their partner to be happy and fulfilled whether they are together or apart. This takes trust, self-confidence and courage. Rather than the wind beneath your wings, it appears your partner may be more of an anchor.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

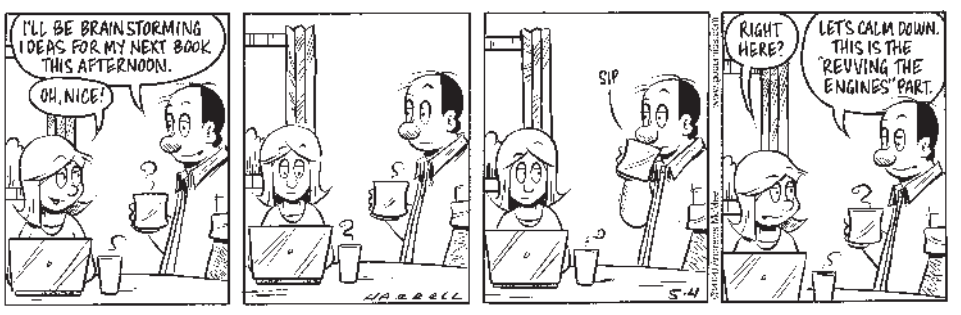

TODAY FOR "SHOW AND TELL," I HAVE A SOUVENIR FROM THE AFTERLIFE! YES, YOU HEARD RIGHT! EQUALLY AMAZING IS MY OWN STORY OF YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, WHEN I ACTUALLY DIED OF BOREDOM!
I WAS DOING MY HOMEWORK, WHEN SUDDENLY I COLLAPSED! I FELT MYSELF RISING, AND I COULD SEE MY CRUMPLED BODY ON THE FLOOR. I DRIFTED UP IN A SHAFT OF LIGHT AND I ENTERED THE NEXT WORLD!
EVENTUALLY, MY HEART STARTED AGAIN AND I CAME BACK TO LIFE... BUT NOT BEFORE BRINGING THIS BACK!
A YO-YO?
IT WAS PRETTY BORING THERE, TOO.
LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT THAT HOMEWORK.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'LL BE BRAINSTORMING IDEAS FOR MY NEXT BOOK THIS AFTERNOON.
OH, NICE!
SIP
RIGHT HERE?
LET'S CALM DOWN. THIS IS THE "REVVING THE ENGINES" PART.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

SAY "AH".
DOCTOR, THE TEST RESULTS FOR YOUR LAST PATIENT ARE POSITIVE FOR THE VIRUS.
DON'T WORRY. I ALWAYS FLIP THE TONGUE DEPRESSOR OVER WHEN I SWITCH PATIENTS.
AH!.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

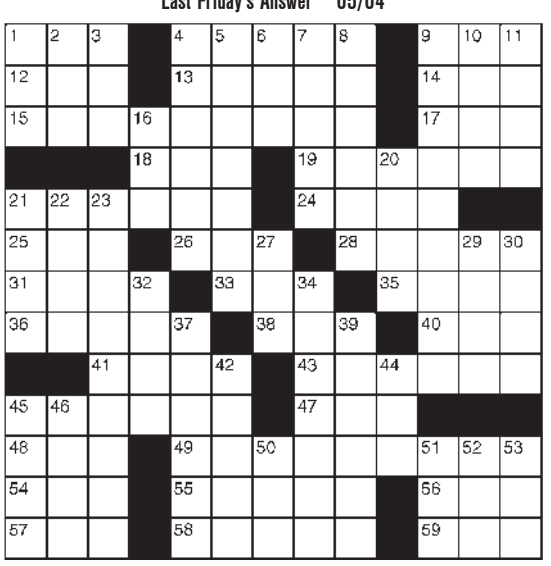
ACROSS
1 Deli meat
4 Squander
9 "Survivor" airer
12 British verb ending
13 Sci-fi visitor
14 Noah's boat
15 Country music duo with the hit song "Want To"
17 Opposing vote
18 — Hill (R&B group)
19 Ambulance sounds
21 Heckled
24 Peron and Longoria
25 Lincoln nickname
26 Morning moisture
28 Blow one's top
31 Surrealist Joan
33 Speck
35 Swelled heads
36 Baby bird?
38 Doze (off)
40 Swiss peak
41 Salty waters
43 Oyster products
45 Barnard grad
47 Biol. or chem.
48 Plead
49 Rio de Janeiro mountain
54 Italian article
55 Kate's sitcom partner
56 Kitchen gadget brand
57 Sailor
58 Stylish wrap
59 Bewitch

DOWN
1 That guy's
2 Tempe sch.
3 Jo's sister
4 Did battle
5 Referred (to)
6 "Chandelier" singer
7 On edge
8 Salad leaf
9 Domino product
10 Muffin choice
11 "The — the limit!"
16 Woodshaping tool
20 Scarce
21 Runs (into)
22 Slightly
23 Diet soda variety
27 Triumphed
29 Survey
30 Recipe amts.
32 Utah city
34 Schooner feature
37 Sunflower State
39 Edict
42 — Ste. Marie
44 Be sick
45 Border on
46 Sultry Horne
50 Day- — paint
51 Sound of delight
52 Log chopper
53 Sly one

Solution time: 26 mins.

C	P	R	■	M	I	D	■	I	E	A	P	S
H	E	E	■	A	D	A	■	A	G	R	E	E
I	A	N	■	I	=	N	A	H	O	R	N	F
E	R	E	■	T	A	C	O	S	■	■	■	■
=	L	E	A	■	L	E	N	■	A	I	R	S
■	■	■	C	D	S	■	E	G	G	N	O	G
C	A	C	H	E	■	■	■	P	O	S	I	I
A	M	O	C	B	A	■	B	A	N	■	■	■
W	I	G	S	■	R	N	A	■	Y	J	K	S
■	■	■	S	C	A	R	S	■	D	Y	E	■
G	R	E	C	N	F	O	R	N	■	D	O	N
A	T	A	R	I	■	M	E	A	■	E	T	S
C	E	T	A	T	■	I	N	C	■	R	O	E

Last Friday's Answer 05/04



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rory McIlroy, 31; Erin Andrews, 42; Will Arnett, 50; Randy Travis, 61.

Happy Birthday: Look for possibilities. Your options are vast, and you shouldn't sell yourself short or act in haste. Time is on your side, and the best opportunities will come if you are willing to wait for the best deal this year. Intelligence and intuition will play major roles in how your life unfolds and the gains you make. Your numbers are 5, 13, 20, 24, 33, 46, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Do your best to get along. Being forward-thinking, having a positive attitude and using a diligent approach to whatever you decide to do will give you the leverage you need to get ahead. Personal gain and physical improvements are favored. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Slow down, take a deep breath and look over your options. Don't let anger or anxiety take over or cause you to miss out on something that has potential. Getting along will be half the battle when dealing with your peers. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* An opportunity should be looked at carefully. If you are too quick to dismiss a possibility, you may have regret. Personal gain is within reach, but first, get the lowdown on what's involved in getting what you want. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* A change will be an excellent way to learn and experience something that will broaden your outlook and give you a chance to explore different options. The busier you are, the less time you'll have to let negativity interfere. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Make well-thought-out changes that are based on truth and intelligence. You'll get much further if you go about your business, take care of your responsibilities and offer kind gestures to those you love. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Concentrate on what makes you happy. Make changes that will allow you to head in a direction that excites you. Refuse to let anyone or anything stand between you and what you want. Take advantage of an opportunity to bring about change. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Be aware of what everyone around you is doing. Don't reveal personal information. Dig in and set your plans in motion. Take the initiative, and do the work yourself. Positive change will depend on how much you are willing to do. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take a stance. If you show inconsistency or anger, you will not get the support you need to follow through with your plans. If change is what you want, be prepared to be the one to make it happen. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Keep your life simple, and stick to the truth. Do something that requires physical energy. An activity that presents a challenge will keep you preoccupied and help you avoid trouble. Don't count on others. If you want something done, do it yourself. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Take care of unfinished business, and move on to activities you enjoy. The changes you make at home should lower your overhead and ease stress. Invest in something that will help you bring in more cash. Negotiations look promising. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Don't feel you have to follow the crowd. Think and do for yourself in order to avoid disappointment. Spend more time addressing personal issues that can encourage a healthier and happier lifestyle. Personal improvement, romance and exercise are encouraged. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Keep an open mind, but don't make a presumptuous move because someone else does. You can offer support without investing or buying into someone's plan. A personal problem will surface if you aren't forthright. Be honest, and do your own thing. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are hardheaded, aggressive and demonstrative. You are loyal and responsive.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

7						5	4	
	5		7		9	8		
2			3	4				7
9					6	1	3	
8								4
	2	3	1					9
3				5	8			1
		6	9		2		8	
	8	4						2

Difficulty Level ★ 5/04

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

7	8	3	2	9	4	5	6	1
9	5	4	7	6	1	2	8	3
1	6	2	5	3	8	7	9	4
5	3	7	9	1	2	6	4	8
2	4	6	8	7	3	1	5	9
8	1	9	4	5	6	3	7	2
6	2	5	3	4	9	8	1	7
3	9	1	6	8	7	4	2	5
4	7	8	1	2	5	9	3	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 5/04

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

PARKING LOTS Solution: 8 letters

H	M	G	N	I	G	R	A	H	C	A	R	D	S	D
C	A	S	A	T	E	E	R	T	S	L	E	V	E	L
R	R	N	P	R	T	T	D	E	L	B	A	S	I	D
U	K	C	D	A	A	Ⓢ	A	S	I	E	O	W	L	T
H	I	O	R	I	C	G	Ⓡ	G	T	R	N	O	S	I
C	N	M	P	N	C	E	E	Ⓐ	I	O	R	O	X	E
R	G	P	A	N	T	A	T	M	Ⓒ	T	L	A	T	R
O	N	L	I	N	E	I	P	O	A	A	T	R	B	S
S	P	E	D	N	C	E	R	P	R	U	L	E	S	M
S	F	X	A	K	R	R	O	O	E	V	O	M	E	U
W	F	L	E	V	A	Z	O	N	E	D	O	A	S	I
A	O	T	I	L	W	D	F	N	O	E	N	C	U	D
L	N	O	H	S	A	R	T	N	E	D	N	G	B	A
K	U	G	N	I	L	O	O	P	A	V	E	D	I	T
S	R	T	I	M	R	E	P	I	W	S	T	O	P	S

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Barrier, Buses, Camera, Cards, Cars, Charging, Church, Complex, Corral, Crosswalks, Dent, Disabled, Door, Garage, Gate, Handicapped, Impervious, Lane, Levels, Lots, Marking, Move, Neon, Online, Paid, Patrol, Paved, Permit, Plan, Pooling, Rate, Rooftop, Rules, Runoff, Sign, Solar, Space, Spots, Stadium, Stone, Street, Swipe, Taxi, Ticket, Tier, Trash, Zone

Last Friday's Answer: Healthy

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Mid December start for NBA 2020-21 season

NEW YORK (AP)—NBA commissioner Adam Silver and team owners discussed delaying the start of next season until December due to complications with the COVID-19 pandemic, according to ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski—an idea that is reportedly gaining traction among owners.

The coronavirus pandemic forced the NBA to suspend operations on March 11. The league currently doesn't have any specific plans to resume play.

The NBA officially postponed both the draft lottery and scouting combine on Friday, both of which were scheduled to take place this month in Chicago. It did not delay the draft itself —which is currently scheduled for June 25—however "there's an increasing belief that it's just a matter of time" before that happens, per Wojnarowski.

There were more than 1.1 million confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the United States as of Friday afternoon, according to The New York Times, and more than 64,500 deaths attributed to the virus.

Most sports leagues in the country, including the NBA, have considered playing games without fans present upon return. The idea behind delaying the start of next season, per Wojnarowski, is to allow fans to be present for as much of the season as possible.

"If you start in December, that doesn't mean the [fans] are coming back in December, but maybe they're back in March," one owner told ESPN.

While talks occurred on Friday, there are "no imminent plans" to make any decisions about next season now. Before that plan is made, the league will almost certainly need to determine how it will move forward with the remainder of the current season.

The idea to start the season in December isn't a new one. One team official even floated it before the coronavirus pandemic took hold.

Atlanta Hawks CEO Steve Koonin said in March that he believes starting the season in mid-December rather than in mid-October would eliminate competition with most other professional sports leagues. Instead of competing with the NFL and college football for the first few months of the season, the NBA would be able to dominate the winter and summer—where Major League Baseball and the PGA Tour are, for the most part, alone in the sports world.

Doing so would push the NBA Finals to August, which would allow the season to conclude just before football starts again each fall.

AP

In this March 10, 2020 file photo, Indiana Pacers guard Victor Oladipo (4) tries to go around the defense of Boston Celtics defenders Daniel Theis (27) and Marcus Smart (36) during the first half of an NBA game in Indianapolis.

"A big piece is you don't have to reinvent the wheel to enhance ratings," Koonin said in March. "Sometimes, moving away from competition is a great way to grow ratings."

"If King Kong is at your door, you might go out the back door, rather than go out the front and engage in a hand-to-hand fight with King Kong. Many times, at the start of the NBA season, we are competing with arguably the best Thursday Night Football game with the NBA on TNT, our marquee broadcast, and we get crushed and we wonder why. It's because at the beginning of the season, there's very little relevance for the NBA. The relevance is now. That's when people are talking about it."

Oladipo trade

The Indiana Pacers are locked into some big money contracts: Malcolm Brogdon at three-years, $65 million after this season; Myles Turner three years, 54 million, Domantas Sabonis' four-year, $77 million extension kicks in next season; plus both T.J. Warren and Jeremy Lamb have a couple of seasons at more than $10 million.

Then there is Victor Oladipo, just returned to the court and starting to round into shape after a major injury. He has only one more season after this one, at $21 million. He and the Pacers talked extension briefly but tabled those talks.

Can the mid-market Pacers keep all those players? Might they trade Oladipo? Other teams are monitoring the situation.

Opposing teams are keeping an eye on the situation in Indy because the club will likely have to commit significant money to Victor Oladipo in the summer of 2021 if it wants to keep him.

The Pacers will be able to exceed the cap to sign Oladipo. But it would take a significant financial commitment from Indy to keep the foursome of Oladipo, Sabonis, Brogdon and Turner intact…

The Knicks, Nets and plenty of other teams are in position to be aggressive if a player of Oladipo's caliber becomes available via trade.

Right now, that's all a big "if" that hinges on how healthy Oladipo is and can he bounce back to his All-NBA level of play. While he was starting to round into form upon his return, he was not his old self, yet (nor should he be expected to be yet), and he was still developing chemistry with Brogdon.

The sense around the league is that the Pacers would move one of their big men, Turner or Sabonis. However, those two have played well together on the front line and the Pacers have shot down trade requests for Turner in the past.

The questions for owner Herb Simon of the Pacers become: Does he want to pay the luxury tax to keep this team together? While this Pacers team is good, is it "pay the tax" like a contender good? Throw into the mix that Simon's money in large part comes from owning shopping malls—a sector hit hard in the current economy—and there are a lot of questions to answer.

Which is why other teams will monitor the situation. The core guys in Indiana could help a lot of other teams.

New Bulls general manager

Meanwhile, Marc Eversley gets a chance to help restore an iconic NBA franchise and set an example for the city's youth.

He welcomes the opportunities.

A former Nike executive who spent the past four years in Philadelphia's front office, Eversley was introduced as the Bulls' general manager on Friday. He succeeds the fired Gar Forman and will work under new top executive Arturas Karnisovas.

Eversley also becomes the Bulls' first black general manager, after spending the past two years as the 76ers' senior vice president of player personnel.

"It means a lot," he said. "I take pride in that. I think it's a tremendous responsibility. I am a black man, I'm in a leadership position now in a city with so many black youths. I see this as a great opportunity. I think being visible is going to be important. And being invested is going to be important. I think this position position with the Bulls provides me with some resources to help drive some change."

Karnisovas said "it's our responsibility" and "it falls on our shoulders" to seek diversity. He will work with Eversley to transform a young team that expected to contend for a playoff spot. Instead, the Bulls were 11th in the Eastern Conference at 22-43 and finishing their third straight losing season when the NBA suspended play due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the front-office leadership in place, the attention turns to coach Jim Boylen. That could take awhile.

Draft combine, lottery pushed back

ILLINOIS (AP)—The NBA is delaying the draft lottery and draft combine, events scheduled for Chicago later this month.

The league made the decision Friday, though it has been expected for some time. The lottery cannot occur until the regular season is completed or is declared over, because team records determine the odds that the 14 non-playoff teams will have of securing the right to pick No. 1 overall in the draft.

For now, the draft remains scheduled for June 25—though that, too, will likely have to change in the coming weeks as the league continues reacting to the coronavirus pandemic.

The lottery was to have taken place May 19. The draft combine was to have run from May 21-24.

The league typically invites about 70 players to the combine, where some of the candidates work out and play in scrimmages and others skip the on-court events entirely and just interview with teams instead. The combine has also been a chance for teams to conduct physicals with players, a key component of the evaluation process.

The NBA has been looking at several options for weeks about the draft schedule and pre-draft events, just as the league has when it comes to possibilities for resuming the season when public health officials say that would be appropriate.

"There are no target dates. There are more target responsibilities," San Antonio CEO R.C. Buford said earlier this week. "And there's still questions. We just got the early-ntry candidates list in the last couple days. That at least gives some kind of clarity on who the draft pool will be. But from there, we don't have clarity on the Chicago pre-draft or medicals or all the things that go on with draft preparation."

The NBA has not played since March 11, when it became the first of the major U.S. pro sports leagues to suspend games because of the pandemic. The league has missed 259 regular-season games because of the shutdown, and the playoffs would have started about two weeks ago.

Dalton to play Prescott's backup with Cowboys

DALLAS (AP)—Andy Dalton is coming home to Texas as Dak Prescott's backup with the Dallas Cowboys.

Dalton and the Cowboys agreed Saturday to a one-year deal that guarantees the former Cincinnati starter $3 million and could be worth up to $7 million. The agreement was first reported by ESPN.

The Cowboys reached a deal with Dalton two days after he was released by the Bengals. That moved cleared the way for No. 1 overall draft pick Joe Burrow, who led LSU to the national championship.

Dalton, born and raised in the Houston area, led TCU to an undefeated season that included a Rose Bowl victory over Wisconsin during the 2010 season before the Bengals drafted him in the second round.

The Cowboys have relied on the untested Cooper Rush behind Prescott the past two seasons. The 32-year-old Dalton marks their biggest investment in a veteran backup since Prescott replaced the injured Tony Romo as a rookie in 2016 and ended up taking his job for good.

Dalton started 133 games for the Bengals and led the franchise's best stretch of playoff appearances—five straight from 2011-15—but couldn't get that elusive win.

Cincinnati lost in the first round each time, setting an NFL record. Dalton had a broken thumb and was sidelined for the last of those playoff appearances, which ended in a last-minute meltdown and an 18-16 loss to Pittsburgh during the 2015 season.

Dalton's 70-61-2 record as a starter is second best by a Bengals quarterback with at least 10 starts, trailing Virgil Carter. Dalton holds the club records for touchdown passes (204) and completions (2,757).

Coach Zac Taylor signaled the end of Dalton's career in Cincinnati by benching him for three games midway through last year's 2-14 season, a move that shocked Dalton and his longtime teammates. Dalton was upset the Bengals didn't try to trade him before the deadline.

The Cowboys have placed the franchise tag on Prescott, who hasn't signed the one-year tender worth about $31 million. The sides have until July 15 to get a long-term contract done.

Prescott played out his four-year rookie contract, becoming on of the NFL's best bargains as 2016 NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year and a two-time Pro Bowler. The 26-year-old's representatives and the Cowboys have been working on a long-term deal for about a year.

After leading Dallas to the NFC's top seed as a rookie in 2016 and losing his first playoff game to Aaron Rodgers and Green Bay, Prescott broke through with his first postseason victory two years later.

The Cowboys entered last season with high expectations and started 3-0 before fading to 8-8 and missing the playoffs. Dallas didn't renew coach Jason Garrett's contract and hired Mike McCarthy.

Meanwhile, former wide receiver Dez Bryant took to Twitter shortly after the Cowboys reached a one-year deal with Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Andy Dalton to slam the move. The team, he said in a long series of tweets, should have taken care of Prescott first.

Bryant played for the Cowboys for eight seasons, racking up nearly 7,500 yards and 73 touchdowns. Dallas released him in 2018. Bryant then signed a one-year deal with the New Orleans Saints, but ruptured his Achilles in his second practice with the team.

He hasn't played in the league since.

AP

In this Dec. 8, 2019 file photo, Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Andy Dalton, left, pushes off against Cleveland Browns defensive end Chad Thomas during the second half of an NFL football game in Cleveland.

Bears declines option on Trubisky

In Chicago, the Bears have declined their fifth-year option for quarterback Mitchell Trubisky for the 2021 season, a person familiar with the situation said Saturday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the move has not been announced. The NFL Network first reported the decision.

The move is hardly a surprise considering the way Trubisky struggled in his third season since the Bears drafted him with the No. 2 overall pick. His yards (3,138), completion rate (63.2%), touchdowns (17) and rating (83) all dropped from the previous year.

The Bears acquired 2018 Super Bowl MVP Nick Foles from Jacksonville in March and plan to hold an open competition for the starting job.

General manager Ryan Pace largely staked his reputation to Trubisky when he traded up a spot with San Francisco to draft him ahead of Kansas City's Patrick Mahomes and Houston's Deshaun Watson. While Mahomes and Watson have emerged as two of the NFL's best quarterbacks, Trubisky has mixed promising flashes with too many poor decisions and throws. And he is facing a murky future in Chicago.

The Bears went 8-8 and missed the playoffs for the eighth time in nine years last season after winning the NFC North at 12-4. Though their defense continued to excel, their offense ranked among the worst in the NFL.

Chicago lacked playmakers to complement receiver Allen Robinson and got little production from its tight ends. It addressed that issue by signing five-time Pro Bowl tight end Jimmy Graham in March and drafting Notre Dame's Cole Kmet in the second round last month.

MLB owners to discuss draft length next week

NEW YORK (AP)—Major League Baseball owners will discuss a length for the amateur draft next week and are likely to start the selections on the original date of June 10, a person familiar with the deliberations told The Associated Press.

Teams and the players' association agreed March 26 to a deal that allowed MLB to cut the draft from 40 rounds to as few as five this year and 20 next year, part of a plan to deal with the new coronavirus pandemic that delayed the start of the season and slashed revenue. As part of the agreement, the sides agreed to leave the assigned slot values of draft signing bonuses at the same level in 2020 and 2021 as they were last year.

That left the total of slot values for a 10-round draft this year at $265.5 million, including $29.6 million for rounds six through 10.

MLB proposed to the union that it would guarantee a 10-round draft in exchange for the slot values for rounds 6-10 being cut by 50%. The union rejected that plan, a person familiar with the decision said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the move was not announced.

The union's decision to reject the plan was first reported by The Athletic and the move to keep the draft on June 10 by the New York Post.

Rather than resume negotiations, teams intend to debate the size of the draft and make a decision, the person said.

Signing bonus pools started in 2012 and limit the amount of money teams can spend. Each slot in the first 10 rounds is a signed a value—the range last year was $8,415,300 down to $142,200—and each team's values are added to a form a pool. Signing bonuses in the first 10 rounds count against the pool along with the amounts above $125,000 of players selected after the 10th round or who were bypassed in the draft and then signed.

A team that exceeds it pool is taxed, and a club more than 5% above loses a first-round draft pick the next year—a threshold never reached.

As part of the March agreement, players and teams agreed that any draft-eligible player not selected this year or next would be limited to a signing bonus of no more than $20,000.

MLB's offer that the union rejected included an additional limit of only five bypassed players at up to $20,000, with the rest held to a maximum of $5,000.

The union agreed in March that signing bonuses can be deferred: up to $100,000 will be due within 30 days of approval, and 50% of the rest payable on July 1 in each of the following two years.

Replay could vanish

Replay reviews could vanish in MLB in 2020 as part of a deal with umpires that contemplates a possible "monastery" setup in which off-the-field movement is restricted because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The agreement, struck late Thursday night, covers how umpires would be paid for a season shortened or wiped out by the virus outbreak, two people told The Associated Press. They spoke Friday on condition of anonymity because there was no official announcement.

Umps are guaranteed 50% of their salaries for May, but would be paid nothing else if no games are played in 2020. Umpires generally make between $150,000 and $450,000.

The start of the season has been postponed because of the virus outbreak and there is no timetable for opening day. If baseball is permitted to proceed this year, MLB is considering playing regular-season games at spring training ballparks in Arizona and Florida that are not wired for replay.

The new agreement gives MLB the right to not use instant replays of umpires' decisions during the 2020 season. Most calls have been subject to video review since 2014 and it's become a big part of games, with about half the challenged calls resulting in a reversal.

The controlled environment would include MLB-provided lodging and meals, and it is called a "monastery" setup in the term sheet, according to a copy of the four-page term sheet obtained by The Associated Press.

Women's soccer loses equal pay bid

CALIFORNIA (AP)—A federal judge threw out the unequal pay claim by players on the U.S. women's national soccer team in a surprising loss for the defending World Cup champions but allowed their allegation of discriminatory working conditions to go to trial.

Players led by Alex Morgan sued in March 2019, claiming they have not been paid equally under their collective bargaining agreement to what the men's national team receives under its labor deal. They asked for more than $66 million in damages under the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In a 32-page decision Friday, U.S. District Judge R. Gary Klausner granted in part a motion for partial summary judgment by the U.S. Soccer Federation. He threw out the Equal Pay Act allegations but left intact the Civil Rights Act claims.

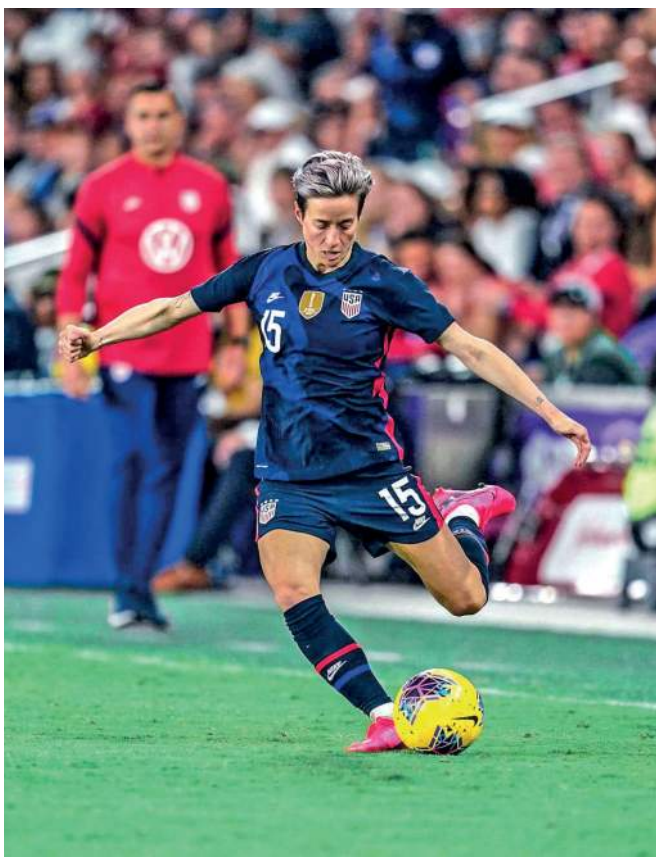
"The history of negotiations between the parties demonstrates that the WNT rejected an offer to be paid under the same pay-to-play structure as the MNT, and the WNT was willing to forgo higher bonuses for benefits, such as greater base compensation and the guarantee of a higher number of contracted players," Klausner wrote.

"Accordingly, plaintiffs cannot now retroactively deem their CBA worse than the MNT CBA by reference to what they would have made had they been paid under the MNT's pay-to-play terms structure when they themselves rejected such a structure," he said.

Klausner left intact claims the USSF discriminated in its use of charter aircraft, and in the money it spent on commercial airfare, hotel accommodations, and medical and training support services.

A trial is scheduled for June 16 in federal court in Los Angeles.

"We are shocked and disappointed with today's decision, but we will not give up our hard work for equal pay," Molly Levinson, spokeswoman for the women's players, said in a statement. "We are confident in our case and steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that girls and women who play this sport will not be valued as lesser just because of their gender."



AP

In this March 11, 2020 file photo, USA midfielder Megan Rapinoe takes a shot during their game against Japan in the SheBelieves Cup at Toyota Stadium in Frisco, Texas.

Players intend to ask the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn Klausner's decision, a move that could delay the trial into 2021 or later.

"If you know this team at all you know we have a lot of fight left in us. We knew this wasn't going to be easy, change never is," defender Becky Sauerbrunn wrote on Twitter.

While the Americans are the most successful women's team, with four World Cup titles including the last two, the U.S. men did not even qualify for the 2018 World Cup. The USSF argued the women actually made more than the men both overall and by game average, and the women claimed they should have the same bonus structure as the men.

"Merely comparing what WNT players received under their own CBA with what they would have received under the MNT CBA discounts the value that the team placed on guaranteed benefits they receive under their agreement, which they opted for at the expense of higher performance-based bonuses," Klausner wrote.

"This issue is insufficient to create a genuine issue of material fact for trial," he added.

Klausner also said the women could not go forward with their claim that the USSF discriminated against them by scheduling more games on artificial turf than the men had. He said there was not sufficient evidence to show that decisions on field surface were made for discriminatory reasons.

He rejected the USSF's argument that the men had a competitive need for charter flights that the women lacked, allowing that part of the suit to go forward. The federation has argued that the men, who have struggled in World Cup qualifying, have more need for charters than the women in order to arrive more rested for their qualifiers.

"This rationale does not fully explain the gross disparity on money spent on airfare and hotels for the teams," Klausner wrote.

In addition, the USSF has said spending in these areas has been equal since the women's union agreed to a new labor deal in 2017.

Klausner allowed other claims of discriminatory travel accommodations, such as money spent on hotels and commercial flights, to go to trial along with claims on support services such as medical and training staff. He said the USSF's lawyers waited until reply briefs to ask for those claims to be thrown out, which meant he did not have to consider them.

ONE

From Page 20

the sidelines. The atmosphere is very exciting, especially when we have close games," Ebuen said.

Tiago Quirantes, one of the regular spectators of the One Pacific matches at the Civic Center Court, said the league reminds him of home.

"I came from the Philippines where basketball is the most loved sport. For someone like me, who left home to work on Saipan, watching basketball games at Civic is like a piece of home. It's loud, lively, and fun. After a stressful day at work, knowing there's a league at civic is kind of a relief. Plus, it's a way for me to pass the time and meet people who love the sport as much as I do,"Quirantes said.

Besides having live matches, Samson said the league has a balanced competition. He said that before the tournament started, they told teams that only four "star" (high-level) players are allowed per each squad, making the playing field pretty even. Those who decided not to recruit "star" players and have their own employees play for their squads are permitted to do so.

Ebuen added that the league is very strict when it comes to playing in complete uniform.

"We want an organized league and one of the ways to do that is to have teams play in complete uniform. We also talked to players/team captains/coaches and told them before the tournament that we will not tolerate excessive complains, so they have to keep their temper in check because a lot of people are watching us and we have to show the fans a good example," Ebuen said.

Right now, the league is on break due to the coronavirus pandemic, but wishes to bring more exciting games to spectators when it's safe to return to the court.

The second edition of the One Pacific caging has just started when matches were suspended late March. The 16 teams are divided into two groups while the eight-team masters division has yet to kick off its competition.

Loving Hands and Mawati are the early leaders in Pool A with similar 2-0 records, while inaugural season runner-up Connie's BBQ is in second place with its 2-1 mark. Other teams in Pool A are 6JMS (1-1), Star Water (1-1), Lakay (1-1), Saipan Warriors (0-2) and Min Yang (0-3). In Pool B, Napa Auto Parts is the pacesetter with its 3-0 card and is followed by Apex Remittance (2-0), MJD (2-0), Blue Haus (2-1), Pacific Hardware (1-2), Hong Ye (0-2), JNL (0-2), and IT&E (0-3).

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Blue Haus' Ed Pangelinan unloads an open jumper during their opening game against Pacific Hardware in the One Pacific caging last February at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LITTLE

From Page 20

Local Little League competitions are held to select teams that will represent the district in regional tournaments. From the regionals, the champion squads (50/70, Major, Junior, and Senior League divisions) will advance to the World Series, which this year was scheduled for August.

In the CNMI's case, the Commonwealth was slated to compete in the Asia Pacific-Middle East Regional Tournament in July in Thailand (50/70 and Major divisions) and Hong Kong (Junior and Senior League categories).

"We just can't go on with the season this year because of this crisis and I know everyone understand our situation. We will focus on keeping our community safe and we hope to see our teams—more squads—next season," Borja said.

This year, the SLLB was to feature five teams each in the Minor and Major divisions, three in the Junior, and two in the Senior.

"The teams are all ready with their uniforms and paperwork. They have also paid their entrance fees, but with this cancelation we will contact the team representatives and return their payment," Borja said.

Meanwhile, this will be the first time in the history of the Little League World Series that the annual gathering of the champion teams across the globe will not take place.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan Little League Baseball players practice at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield to get ready for the 2020 season, which was eventually canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This is a heartbreaking decision for everyone at Little League International, but more so for those millions of Little Leaguers who have dreamt of one day playing in one of our seven World Series events. After exhausting all possible options, we came to the conclusion that because of the significant public health uncertainty that will still exist several months from now, and with direction from Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine, as well as senior public health officials and government leaders from locations where our other six World Series are held, as well as the their qualifying regional tournaments, it will not be possible to proceed with our tournaments," Keener was quoted as saying in the Little League news bulletin.

Little League, which was founded in 1939, would have held its 74th edition of the World Series this year and with the cancelation, it's diamond anniversary celebration has also been moved to 2022.

Mid December start for NBA 2020-21 season

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Dalton to play Prescott's backup with Cowboys

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Little League season canceled

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this file photo, McDonald's Dylan Santos throws from the mound during the first inning of their game against the Kagman Little Legals in the Major division of the 2019 Saipan Little League Baseball at the Capitol Hill Ballfield. SLLB is scrapping its 2020 season due to the coronavirus pandemic.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this Saipan Little League Baseball file photo last year, a Braves player is commended by his coach after safely making it to first base during their game against the Falcons in the Major division at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

It's final. There will be no Little League games this season.

After months of suspension, the CNMI Little League District has decided to eventually scrap the 2020 competition due to the coronavirus pandemic, according to assistant district administrator and Saipan Little League Baseball president Mike Borja.

The decision came after the CNMI received a letter from the Little League International last Friday, informing the district about the cancelation of the 2020 Little League World Series. Little League president and chief executive officer Stephen Keener last Thursday announced the shelving of the Little League World Series this year due to the significant public health uncertainties and difficulties in scheduling regional qualifiers for the annual event.

"With Little League International announcing that there will be no World Series this year, we have also decided to cancel our season. It's unfortunate that we have to make this call, but our community's health and safety is our main concern right now," Borja said.

The SLLB has canceled the 2020 season without even having to kick off the competition. The league was supposed to start in February, but the opening was pushed back to March 14 to give teams more time to complete the tournament requirements. The March kickoff was then reset after Little League International has advised its members to withhold activities until April 8 due to the pandemic. The suspension was later extended until May 11 before the Little League International eventually decided to pull the plug on its annual tournament.

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One Pacific caging: Engaging, balanced league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

After its successful inaugural season, the One Pacific Promotional Basketball League 2020 is back with a bigger field.

From 12 last year, the One Pacific caging drew 16 squads in the open division, plus eight masters teams this season.

Organizer Nelson Samson and game officials head Sonny Ebuen attributed the league's growth at this early to its balanced competition and ability to engage the spectators during the matches.

"We have an announcer every game, bringing more life and excitement to every match. Spectators like it when the announcer does play-by-play account of the games or gives nickname to a player. It's like they are watching professional matches. Often, you would also hear the crowd commenting about the game or talking to the players from

See ONE on Page 19

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Pacific Hardware's Ken Viray drives against Napa Auto Part's Paulo Rafols, left, and Ivan Devero during an earlier game in the One Pacific caging at the Civic Center Court.